

# THE SCHOOLE OF THE NOBLE and Worthy Science of Defence.

Being the first of any English-mans inuention, which professed the sayd  
Science; So plainly described, that any man may quickly  
*come to the true knowledge of their weapons, with  
small paines and little practise.*

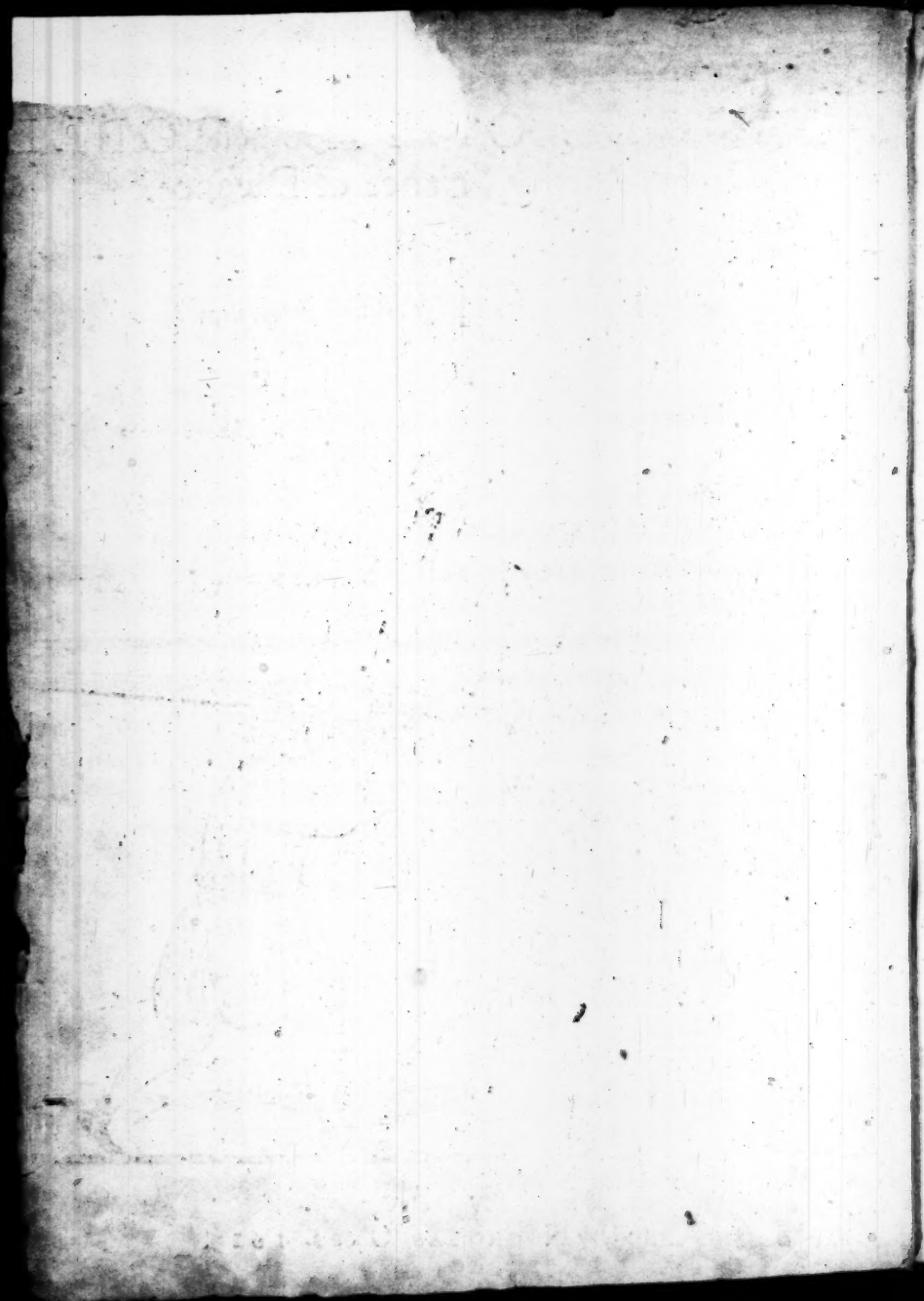
Then reade it aduisedly, and vse the benefit thereof when occasion shal serue, so shalt  
thou be a good Common-wealth man, liue happy to thy selfe,  
and comfortable to thy friend.

*Also many other good and profitable Precepts and Counsels for the managing of Quarrels,  
and ordering thy selfe in many other matters.*

Written by IOSEPH SVETNAM.



LONDON,  
Printed by NICHOLAS OKES. 1617.



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TO THE HIGH AND  
MIGHTIE PRINCE CHARLES,  
PRINCE OF WALES, DVKE OF CORNE-

wale, Yorke, Albany and Rothesay, Marques of Or-  
*mount, Earle of Rosse, and Baron of Armanoch, high*  
Seneschal of Scotland, Lord of the Isles,  
*and Knight of the most Noble order*  
*of the Garter.*

**M**ost Gracious and No-  
ble Prince, the many  
great and kinde fauours  
which I receiued from the  
hands of your late Bro-  
ther deceased, vnto whom I was tutor in  
the skill of weapons, to my no little credit,  
which makes me now turne backe to shew  
my loue in a small measure vnto your  
Princely selfe, and yet it is as much as I  
am able, a bunch of grapes is but a small  
present, and yet King Philip of Mace-

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

don did receiue them, and accept them, and the rather, because a poore man presented them, and therefore I trust your Highnesse will more esteeme the good-will of the giuer, then the value of the gift.

Three things did chiefly encourage me to publish it vnder the glorious name of your gracious Highnesse: The first is, in regard of your Highnesse deepe desire to gaine experience in all Arts and Sciences, the which is seene by your Graces fauouring and furthering any man which is endued with any good quality, therein rightly resembling a branch of the same Stocke from whence your Excellency sprang, of whom in my next Epistle to the Reader I will speake more at large: But at this time for doubt of beeing offensive, with the renewing of olde griefes, I stand in a maze, like vnto that childe,  
who

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

who being asked whether he loved his father or his mother best, stood mate as doubting how to answer for feare of displeasing the one of them: euen so in this place will I. Now the second cause of this my Dedication unto your Excellency is, in respect of my vehement loue wherto in duty I am bound unto your Princely selfe: and thirdly, that it may passe vnder your Highnesse protection, the better to shroud it selfe from backe-biters and fault-finders, least amongst such it be taken vp like a friendlesse vagarant: Oh therefore let it find fauour, I humbly intreate your Highnesse, althoughe it can little pleasure your Princely selfe, yet it may stead many others, and so doubting least I haue troubled your Highnesse ouer long. I will therefore heere drawe the Curtaines, and commit your Highnesse to the Protection of the Almighty, who euer blesse,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

*preserve and keepe your Highnesse with  
long life, and prosperous health, and hap-  
pinesse to the worlds end.*

By your Highnesse to be

commanded so long as

I live.

Joseph Swetnam,



*An Epistle vnto the common Reader.*

**I**N setting out of a booke, friendly Reader, this I know, that there is no better a thing to be obserued then order, for except there be an order in all things, all runneth to confusion, but what doe I meane to talke of orders, which am no Scholler, nor haue no learning; but only a little experience, which God and nature hath bestowed vpon me. As it is vnpossible to builde a Church without lyme or stone, no more can a workman worke without tooles, yet to auoide idlenesse, something I will make of it, although I cannot make it sound to so good a tune as I would, for want of learning, for I was neuer at *Oxford* but while I baited my horse; nor at *Cambridge* but while one *Sturbridge* faire lasted: wherefore if you doe examine mee concerning learning, I shall answer you as the fellow did the gentleman, who asking him the way to *London*, a poke full of plumbes said he; or as he which came from a Sermon was asked what he heard there; he said it was a good Sermon, and the Preacher spake well, but he could not tell one word what hee said, no more can I answer one word scholler-like or according to learning; yet both at *Oxford* and *Cambridge* I looked vpon the Schollers, and they looked vpon me, and so I became a little the older, but neuer the wiser; wherefore if I should continue tempering this booke so long till I had put it in order, I should resemble those, which doe make their apparell so long of the newest fashion, vntill they are quite out of fashion, or like as the fiddlers doe their strings, who wrest them and temper them so long, vntill they bring them out of all time, tune, and reason, least I should doe so I will let it goe with this drafte as it is: but gentle Reader looke not heere to gather grapes of thornes, nor figs of thistles: nor of a wild and a barren tree, nothing else but  
wilde

wilde and barren fruit, yet amongst dust, sometimes there are  
pearles found, and in hard rockes gold and stones of great price,  
I haue heere as it were mixed wheat and rye, barlye and oates,  
Beanes and Pease altogether, now take a little paines to sepa-  
rate that graine which thou likest best for thine owne benefit. I  
giue thee here a friendly caueat, to prepare thy selfe in a readi-  
nes, for although thou art at quiet now, yet dost thou not know  
how soone thou shalt be vrged to take weapons in hand, as my  
selfe and many others haue beene, when I least thought vpon it,  
therefore to haue iudgement and skill in weapons is good, al-  
though thou neuer haue occasion to vse it. The Prouerbe saith  
cunning is no burthen, the same mouth which at one time saith,  
I will liue quietly, for I will make no brawles with any, yet at  
another time he again will say, oh that I had skill, for then wold  
I bee reuenged on such a one that hath iniuriously wronged  
me. Therefore for such a cause be prepared before hand, for if the  
King were sure that he should neuer haue wars, what neede had  
he then to prouide armour and weapons, but in the time of  
peace hee prouideth himselfe; the wise Mariner prouides in a  
calme for a storme, for things doubtfull are to be dreadfull. It is  
better to liue in feare then in security, and to this purpose *Tully*  
hath a pretty saying which goeth thus; *hee which desireth peace let*  
*him prouide for wars*, but I feare mee that the tyde will be spent,  
before I can double this point, and therefore here I will cast an-  
chor, and will ride in this rode something longer then I wold,  
for feare least I cast my barke away on a lee shore, for want of  
water; these words of warinesse doe I vse because there are ma-  
ny which no sooner out of the shell, but are cast away like an  
addle egge.

Therefore I wold not haue yong sprigs spoiled in the blo-  
some, I meane I wold not haue yong branches or young enter-  
eres into the world imbarke themselues in the ship of fooles, for  
feare least they cast themselues away in a manner, before they  
haue had any beginning, for I haue knowen many blasted in the  
budding in a manner, before they came to know cheefe from  
chalke: onely for want of instruction, and likewise some againe  
haue perished, and yet not for want of instruction, but they  
haue knowen what was good for them, and yet wold not seek  
it,



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it, but haue delaid the meanes, as many delay their repentance, till the latter day, or till it be too late, not much vnlike a sluggard, which rowling himselfe, and looking abroad in the morning, he seeth that it is high time to rise, yet sluggishly he lyeth downe againe to sleepe, and so forgetteth himselfe; euen so many perish, some for want of good counsell, and some for lacke of forecasting a mischiefe before it doe light vpon them. It is said that we must not tempt God, *Math. 4.* but I hold it a tempting of God to presume wholly vpon him for all occasions whatsoeuer, without seeking other meanes which is commonly known, and by God prepared for vs: as if we were sicke men we ought to take the Physitians counsell, and if wounded we must seeke for helpe of a Chyrurgian, if our house be on fire we must powre on water, and if we fall in a ditch, we must not lye still without vsing other meanes besides, saying God helpe vs, but for this and all other things God hath appointed meanes, we must seek and then no doubt God will giue his blessing with it, but wee must not presume how carelesly soeuer we liue, or how desperately soeuer we dye, nothing can hinder vs of our saluation, but so far deceiued I feare me are such, that there is a thunderbolt of mischiefe prepared for their ignorāce herein. Our Sauior Christ would not presume so much of the mercy of God the Father, as when he was vpon the pinnacle to cast himselfe downe, but hee came downe by other meanes, for the stayres were made for the purpose; God the fathermight otherwise haue saued *Noah* without any Arke if it had pleased him, but *Noah* had warning that such a thing should be, whereupon he sought a meanes to saue himselfe by making the Arke, therefore he that will not be prepared before hand with oyle in his Lampe, or with skill in his weapons, when there is meanes to be found, he may be shut out of heauen as the five foolish virgins were if hee chance to bee slaine suddenly, as many a man hath been, by dying without repentance.

Indeed if there were no meanes then if we did with humbleness come vnto God, no doubt then I say but God would miraculously defend his seruants, as hee did the children of Israel when their enemies were behind them, and the red sea before them, then there was no meanes nor helpe left them, but only in



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the Lord, but then the Lord stopped not his eares nor shortned not his armes, but gaue them passage with his outstretched arm thorow the red sea, and then againe they being in the wilderness, there was neither meate nor drinke, and then and there againe the Lord sent them foode from heauen, and he also made the hard rockes gush forth riuers of water. The Mariner in distresse throweth ouer boord the Marchants goods which are in ship, and yet then finding small hope of life he cutteth down the masts of the ship, and so he throweth them and the sayles ouerboord, which should be the onely meane to bring them to land, but then these Mariners being bereft of al hope, they rely wholly vpon God, which neuer leaueth in distresse those which trust in him, but then he miraculously doth defend them, and bring them into a safe harbor contrary vnto mans expectation.

So not onely here in this place, but as I goe on I will shew some examples out of the booke of God and from the Philosophers and other Schoole men, and the application to be applied vnto our selues, for there is nothing written but hath bene written for our learning, and of those we are to learne counsell of which haue runne through the brambles, briers, and the mischiefes of the world.

Then be not wise in thine owne conceit, for *S. Iohn* and *Paul* saith that the wise are caught in their owne craftinesse. *Iohn* 9. 13. *1 Cor.* 3. 19. If the wise are caught what then will become of the ignorant and foolish, not onely of this profession, but of all others; for there are many of all trades which doe thinke their owne wit best, and hating to bee reformed, but I wish such to take heede of ignorance pitfall, least they fall into the springle with the woodcocke; for who is so bold as blind bayard. But as some men of all trades with small skill doe goe on and liue by their trades and yet in a manner but botchers, euen so I haue often hard many a man say, that with a little skill they haue saued their liues being put vnto tryall, for those which are in danger of drowning will catch at a straw to saue their liues, but for the most part it so falleth out, that if the father or the master be a coward, or vnskilfull in his weapons, then the sonnes of that Father or the seruants of that Master, seldome prooue good soldiers, not much vnlke that saying of the Prophet when the mo-  
thers

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ther is an Hittite, and the Father an Ammorite, the child seldome prooues an Israelite, *Ezekiel 145*. Then we must not follow or goe on being led on blindfoldly, by a cowardly sort of people, which will say that a good eye or a good heart is all that belongs vnto the defence of a mans body, these are they which professing themselues to be wise, are become fooles. *Rom. 1. 22*. Or they may be compared vnto those which talke of *Robin hood* and yet neuer shot in his bow, so this trumpe haue I cast in your way, for loath I am to leaue you any starting holes to wind out at, but that you may keepe the high beaten way, least in seeking by-wayes you wander quite out of the way, yet mistake me not in thinking that hereby I seeme to hale thee on for thy owne good, like a beast, for I doe but lead thee with the cords of loue, and wish thee to taste of this my opinion which I haue new broached. And I make no doubt but in tryall it will be no whit distasting vnto thee, for by experience I speake it that aboue all, skill is the key of the worke, as the eye to the body, or as the Captaine to the souldiers, or the Pilot to the ship; if the eye bee darke in walking, the body falleth, if the Captaine be ignorant, then doe the Souldiers march disorderly, or if the Pilot bee vn-skilfull, the ship failes in danger, but as I was about to tell you of a sort of logger-headed asses which further more will perswade their familiar friends, by telling them that skill will doe them no good, for when they haue learned skill and afterwards when they shall haue occasion to vse their weapons, then such dunces will say that skill will be forgotten & little thought vpon. Also they say that a man with a sword will cut off thy rapier at one blow, but I say this is a most cowardly kind of ignorance, for if a skilfull man doe hold the rapier, it is not a hundred blows with a sword can doe a rapier any harme, no although they light vpon him. Therefore those which will perswade any from learning skill with weapons, for the defence of their bodies, may fitly be compared vnto the false Prophets amongst the Iewes, which perswaded them that they should not feare nothing, but peace, peace, peace, when the Assyrians were in a readinesse to cut their throats as in the 6 of *Jeremy* the 14, there you may read it, therefore a prouident care ought to bee had, as *Iehosaphat* did when he feared the Moabits to come vpon him, *2 Chron. 20. 3*.

Then shew  
not thy selfe  
worse then a  
beast, for beast  
haue wit to  
find out reme-  
dies to couer  
their griefe.

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*David* liued securely in *Ierusalem*, and without feare, which made him forget God, as in the 2. *Sam.* 11. the whole Chapter is worth the reading; doth not the wisest man that euer wrote say, that there is a time of war and a time of peace, *Eccle.* 3. 8. If a man did know what howre the theefe would come, he would surely watch, wherefore be aduised to deale wisely, but not like vnto *Pharao* for he said, let vs deale wisely when he dealt most foolishly, *Exodus* 1. 10. and so we will goe on.

In reading ouer diuers Hystories I thereby vnderstanding the noble acts, and also noting the manly mind of these who liued many hundred yeeres agoe, whose fame shall neuer dye, whereas cowardly dastards which neuer bent their studies in marshall exploits, such I say at their death their fame dyeth with them, and so they are quickly raked vp in the ashes of forgetfulness, and buried in the valley of obliuion. So that if a man would goe search for the pedigree of their gentility, they shall finde it laid vp in a beggars box, or as the Charter of a City written in dust, whereas on the other side the valiant and gallant minded men, although they dye, yet in their life time their manly acts and valiant deedes which they worthily performed, some in the warres and some at single combat, and some at other honorable and laudable exercises, whereby they merited to themselves immortall fame for euer, for to some no exercise nor weapon came amisse as in stead of many examples these two out of the book of God shall be sufficient, *David* with his sling, (as *Hercules* with his Club) and *Sampson* with his Iaw-bone or any other weapon which came next to his hand, but loth I am to trouble you with so long an Epistle or Preface, yet for an Introduction to the rest something I must say and most of that which I haue and will say is so necessary as the rest, although it be longer then I would, but we will now to the matter.

Then thus, by reason of diuers errors which are in sundry mens teaching of this noble arte of defence, I therefore being pricked forward by the earnest request of some of my friends, to describe the rules of weapons, which I by my study haue inuented, and by practise brought to perfection, and likewise for my countries benefit, I meane to better the vnskilfull in knowledge, I haue thought it good to open plainly the best grounds, which

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which belongeth to our English weapons, that are now in vse, so far as my simple inuention by great practice hath attained vnto. Another reason which moued me hereunto was where some doe find out many hidden secrets which they bury in the earth againe with their bodies, or else if they make it known, it shall bee to such a faithfull friend as they loue and affect dearly, all writers that euer wrote did write either for profit or pleasure: some to profit others, and some to pleasure themselves; and some haue wrote common and necessary things for their owne posterity after them; I write but of common things, yet not so common as necessary, and therefore my meaning is to make my secret study known so plainly as I can vnto all the world, for the benefit of many thousand yet vnborne, for euery man hath or should haue skill in his weapons, the reasons shall follow, as occasion shall serue hereafter more at large; but as yet I know the greatest number are blinded in an ignorant conceit, I meane such as doe thinke to ouercome their enemies if occasion doe serue by quicknesse of the eye, or by a kind of valorous resolution, which for the auoiding of this and such like abuses, I haue here and there put downe sundry reasons in this booke, although they be not in order, yet take a little paines to seeke them out, for I wrote this booke at such leasurable fits as time would permit me; now for affection sake some will say it is well done, and others againe will say it is reasonable and indifferent, and so I pray you let it passe, for if I should perceiue it should goe for starke nought, then should I account my time and labor very ill bestowed; but yet this I know, if it were ten times worke then it is, yet would it be welcom to a number of my old friends and familiar acquaintance, such as were the cause of this my idle time spending, who were earnest with me for the setting forth of this worke. Lo this is the anchor whereon my hope dependeth, but yet I make a doubt least that my booke may light into the hands of some enuious mates, who neuer knew me, yet will not sticke to say, vpon the very first sight, oh this is such a mans worke, I know well enough what hee could doe, and yet will not fully giue vp their verdit, but onely shake the head, with a wrymouth and a smiling countenance, throwing it from them, and so seeming by their silence that they could further

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disgrace mee, but will not. Indeed it is a more easier matter for such to find fault with a part of my booke then to amend the whole, but I could wish such learne before they take vpon them to controule, but those which are wise and kind, will accept of my good will, for I haue giuen out this but as a theame; let a wiser then I rime vpon it, and although it seeme but as it were a glimpse of the noble Art of defence, in regard of the substance, yet some will perceiue day at a little hole; wherefore trauell further in it, till you find out the substance, like a good Surgion search the wound to the bottome before thou lay a plaster, I meane reade it ouer before thou giue iudgement; and then play the wise mans part which is to speake little, although he thinke much; indeed I must confesse a vanity in my selfe and that I haue deserued blame, because so bluntly I haue set forth such an vnperfect peece of worke, but my reasons in the latter end of the booke may a litle excuse me, but in the mean while let it be neuer the worse welcome vnto thee, for that it hath my poore name vnto it, I speake this because I know there are some will speake they care not what, to disgrace they know not whom, without rendring any reason at all, but onely out of a dogged humor, or an idle braine, some finding fault with the gards, and some because I haue written of things which belongeth not to the matter or ground of this worke, and some because *it is a booke of pictures*, accounting a booke of pictures fit for children and foole; to answer such I say when a child or a foole doth looke in a glasse, he doth thinke there is a baby on the other side, but when men of discretion looke in a glasse, they do not thinke so; therefore as by the Heathen we may learne many good lessons, euen so a man of vnderstanding may learne wisdom, and gaine experience of a foole; I wrote not this altogether to pleasure those that are skilfull already, for this booke can steed them but little, for the whole and sound need not a Physition, but the ignorant and vnskilfull may profit by this booke as much if with discretion they take regard in their practise according to my direction, as if my selfe were in person to teach them, but both the skilfull, and vnskilfull, the wise and the foolish may here learne one lesson or other, which they neuer learned before; yet I know not how euery one will take this my presumption, in aduenturing



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to set out a booke hauing no learning, yet I pray you reade it ouer first, and then iudge, but yet be slow in condemning mee, for I haue done my good will, now he which can make a simple thing better, he ought so to handle the matter, that although he get credit himselfe, yet condemne not me for shewing the best I could; therefore so iudge of mee behind my backe as you would haue others iudge of you, but if you iudge well and like well of it, then shall you haue the second part with six weapons more, but I will first see what will become of this first part, let it commend or condemne it selfe, for great braggers cannot better it, nor dissembling speeches impaire it, neither will I maintaine for well done, all that I haue done, but if you accept it then I haue all my desire, if otherwise good will shall beare the blame for my presumption: but why doe I make a dought of any euill speeches, which deserue no blame, againe this I know that there is none which standeth in so much need of good words as those which goe about to couer dishonest deeds, wherefore I may say as that great Captaine *Marius* who hauing occasion to vse a speech before the people of Rome, in his conclusion hee said, although my words are not well set in order I waigh not so much so that my deeds be good.

I haue made this of bricke and stones, as *Augustus* said of *Rome* at the first, but now *Rome* is built with marble: euen so I wold wish that some expert and learned person or other would pull downe this rude begun worke of mine and build it vp with marble, for the worke it selfe if it were workmanlike handled, deserueth to be written in letters of gold, and to remain for euer, but first it must be twice or thrice distilled as they doe their *Rosafolis*, for first it is *Aquavitæ*, & then in the second and third distillation, there is bestowed greater charge and more excellent matter ariseth of it.

I haue but roued at skill in weapons, yet I am sure that I haue shot so neere the marke that some will account me for a good Archer, otherwist they would neuer haue beene so important with me to haue me put my directions in writing, and when it was in writing so many desired Copies, that amongst so many friends I knew not which to pleasure first, but especially and aboue all the late high and mighty Prince *Henry* whom I well hoped

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hoped that he should haue liued to haue bene the ninth *Henry* and the tenth worthy of the world, for what did any of the other nine worthies doe, but this good Prince was as likely, if he had liued to haue performed as much as any of them; for what hath bene done but may be done againe. But as I was about to say, this good Prince had the perusing of this book and earnestly perswaded me to print it, but I had not leisure to finish it before death vntimely tooke him away to my griefe and many more, for all the whole kingdome was nothing but mourning. Death were kind if he tooke none, but those which offended, but oh most vnkind death, for thou in taking away that good yong Prince, hast taken away him which neuer offended, for there was neuer the like seene in one so yong, for his wisdom, learning, and kind curtesie, to all which came to see his Princely selfe, talking so mildly and familiarly to euery one which did so reioyce and glad the hearts of all true and louing subiects, and also caused him in his fame to be spoken of, for Kings and Princes are talked of at poore mens tables, and good words he deserued, as euer any earthly creature did. For besides his skill in Musicke, hee was able by his learning to discourse with any forraine Prince whatsoeuer, also his admirable and well riding of a great horse, and his excellent running at tilt or ring; likewise his cunning in weapons, for the fight on horsebacke or on foote, and for tossing the pike neuer so many feates seene in any Prince, insomuch that it made strangers stand amazed to behold him; at a word hee had experience in all artes or sciences, thereby seeming as it were desirous to trust more to his owne valour, if occasion serued, then to the goodnesse of his horse. And so to make an end least of the ignorant I get the name of a claw-blacke, and also another doubt I haue, least vnder-taking so difficult a taske, and being not able to discharge it according vnto the dignity and worthinesse thereof, the which I cannot doe, and therefore I will not wade so far in so dangerous a riuer, but that I may easily escape out, wherefore like the finger of a diall I will point, it must be the clocke which telleth you the iust time of the day, I haue drawne his Highnesse in bare colours, and so I leaue the oily colours vnto those which are learned, you may see by a tast what wine is in the butte, and so



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to our matter againe. Now he which will practise after my direction, thou maist a little the rather attaine vnto that perfect knowledge in the Art or skill with thy weapons hauing an able body by agility to preferue that skill which I haue here in this booke laid open vnto thee, for I did vnderstand many things which my body was not able to performe; now because many at the first will waxe weary in their practise, yet such wearinesse is ouercome by often exercise, and that new skill once obtained will be such a pleasure to thee, that it putteth all wearinesse out of thy remembrance, now vntill thou hast skill thou must not thinke it a toyle, but stroue continually to overcome wearinesse: resolute this with thy selfe, that the paine will be nothing so wearisome as the gaine of skill will be delightfull and comfortable vnto thee, and commendable amongst others: I haue made it as plaine and laid it as open as I can expresse by words, because I would haue every man expert in weapons, considering that skill in weapons is so honourable and so precious a thing, that in my mind it may be preferred next vnto diuinity, for as diuinity preserueth the soules of those which follow it, from hell and the diuell, so doth this noble and worthy art of defence defend the body from hurts and skars of those which learne it, but those which neither follow the one nor learne the other, the first sort for ought I know may goe throw fire brands in hell, and the second sort may sit in an alchouse, and there shew how many hurts, and likewise tell how many wounds he hath about his body; for I haue known wany brag of their hurts, and in my conceit they take a pride in that they haue stood so neere the point of a weapon, whereby to receiue wounds, therefore they are willing that the world should know how venturous they haue been, but now in my minde if they had skill they need not bee hurt: wherefore skill is not onely auailable to preferue and keepe the body without hurts and wounds, but also the vse and practise with weapons, doth driue away all aches, griefes, and diseases, it remooueth congealed blood, and breaketh impostumes, it maketh the body nimble, and plyant, it sharpeneth the wit, it increaseth the sight, and procureth strength, and expelleth melancholy and cholericknes, and many other euil conceits, it keepeth a man in breath, in per-

Give not ouer  
practise nor  
reiect not skill  
because thou  
canst not be a  
master of art,  
or a doctor at  
the first day,  
for time must  
worke and  
bring al things  
to passe, for  
that is well  
done which is  
done by lei-  
sure, for hast  
many times  
makes wast.

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fect health, it makes him to be of longe life which vseth it, it is vnto him which hath the perfect skil in weapons, a most friendly, & comfortable companiō, when he is alone, hauing but only his weapons about him, it putteth him out of all feare, and in the wars and places of most danger it maketh a man bold, hardy valiant, and venturous. wherefore they that are once experienced in the skill of weapons will afterwards to the end of their liues enconrage the vnskillfull to learne still, considering how necessary a thing skill in weapons is, insomuch that God and nature tollerates the practise of this skill in weapons, which is here ment for the defence of mans body, it also preferueth many from murder, also in the wars it may likewise stead a King, gentleman, or any other priuate souldier; for if in the wars a single combat is desired, as that of *Goliath*, there started out of the army a *David* who with a godly valour stood in the gap, for the good and preseruatiō of many mens liues, which no doubt else had perished in that great and dangerous battell. Therefore it behooueth Kings being challenged by their equalls for the safeguard and good of their subiects and country, to aduenture and hazard their owne liues in hope of a conquest, so that thereby the wars may cease.

Some there are which take delight to talke of the arte of defence, and yet haue no insight nor iudgement therein, the proverbe is verified in such which goeth thus, there are some which talke of *Robin-hood* which neuer shot in his bowe, I speake this because a gentleman on a time came to my Schoole and would not play by no meanes, yet he was busie with his tongue in teaching others, and in discoursing of seuerall weapons, and seuerall guards, but by his words he bewraied his small iudgement, for his speech founded to no sence nor reason, and so I being weary with hearing him talke so long, and far from the marke which he aimed at, so at length I rounded him in the eare, thus, hold your peace, or else speake softly, for my vsner laughs you to skorne. But we will to our matter againe, and draw to a conclusion of this Epistle, for the necessary vse of weapons. In *Luke* the twelue there the Lord as it seemeth did thinke them to be more better then a coate vpon a mans backe, he therefore bade his Disciples generally, goe said he, sell your coates and buy you  
swords,

### *The Epistle to the Reader.*

swords, he spake not this to one of them alone, but vnto them all.

Now the Kingly Prophet *David* teacheth you where to weare your swords, saying gird thy sword on thy thigh, hee doth not bid thee weare it about thy necke in a string, euen so as the Lord in many places of the Bible is said to be of many professions, for he is called a shepheard, a husband-man, a Physitian, and *David* in his 144. Psalme; in a manner calleth him a sencer, for there he saith that the Lord did teach his hands to war, and his fingers to fight: He also saith in another of his Psalmes, I am a worme and no man, and yet I feare not what man can doe vnto me. Other examples bending to this purpose hereafter shall follow more at large, some in one Chapter, and some in another, as they come in my mind, and although it hath been my study and practise this twenty yeeres, yet now I haue vnfolded euery place, and shewed euery wrinkle of these few weapons, so far as my inuention hath attained vnto, and I haue set them downe so large and made them so plaine, as by words I could any way expresse them, so that thou maist learne them in twenty dayes and lesse, if not all, yet enough for the sure defence of thy body, and the rest shall follow in a second booke hereafter, if thou dost friendly accept of this.

In the meane time arme thy mind to these weapons here following, for they are sufficient for thy defence at single combat, also here thou shalt find other lessons no lesse profitable then delightfull, if thou with content peruse them, and so I will hinder thee no longer from that which ensueth, and therefore ending my Epistle with these words of the Frier, who often in his Sermon said the best is behind, so he that readeth but the beginning of a booke, can giue no iudgement of that which enueth; then read it ouer, and thou shalt not be deluded with the best is behind.

I hope I may cal this booke a booke without any offence, for the collier he calleth his horse a horse, and the Spanish Iennet is but a horse. Now as this art is called a Noble arte, and not so named vnfittingly, being rightly vnderstood, for there is no art nor science more to bee preferred before this, for that there is none that iumpeth in equality, nor that matcheth in singularity

*The Epistle to the Reader.*

or that hath so many sundry subtile devices and ingenious inventions, as this noble art of defence hath. Now hee that doth but read of this art, yea although he read neuer so much, yet without practise and by experience in triall, it will be vnperfect, for how can perfection be attained but by practise, and therefore it also behooueth thee to vse practise with sundry men, and so to make vse of the diuersity of each mans skill, and then for thy benefit, like the wise physition who of many simples maketh one compound, or as the bee which by her serious industry gathereth vertue from sundry sorts of hearbs and flowers, & thereof maketh her hony, she is not therefore to be condemned of enuy, but rather to be commended of all.

Neither doe I write this booke altogether to profit those in learning that which they before wanted, but only to set them and other willing minds a work which by arte and learning can better swim through such a deepe riuer then I can, it should haue been better if my learning had been answerable to my wil, yet hoping that the wise will rather winke at small faults, then rashly reprove that which may profit the simple, for all haue not skill and cunning alike, I am perswaded that some will the rather passe it ouer with patience, although it be but only for affection to the arte, and so hoping that this my worke may bee profitable to all, for so it can no way be hurtfull to none, but if you chance to meeete with this booke after he hath serued out the apprentiship of seauen yeeres, if God grant me life so long you shall see him in double apparell, and then you shall haue iust cause to say that his master hath fulfilled his couenants, for I wish all men well, and euery one an increase of skill in all laudable and profitable arts or sciences, and so with this long entry into a little parlor, I leaue you to him whose seate is in heauen, and whose foot-stoole is the earth. And rest,


Thine in the Lord,

*Ioseph Swetnam.*



¶ Vnto all Professors of the Noble and  
worthie *Art of Defence* I  
send greeting.



Oft noble brethren by profession, and brethren in  
Christ by Religion, wishing all health and happines  
to all them of the noble *Art or Science of Defence*;  
and as your profession is noble, so in brotherly loue,  
I doe earnestly request you all to vse it in that noble  
fashion, as the name or title requires, the rather, &  
for because you are men, not onely noted and talked  
of, but often looked on and more pointed at, then any other ordinary men  
are, of what profession soener. Also it is the worlds wonder, to see a man of  
ciuill gouernement vsing this profession, therefore I pray you consider with  
me: a little, that we are as a Beacon set on a hill, or like a candle in a can-  
dlestick; then let not your candle be made with a great wike, and no tal-  
low, but let him be so mixt with both, that your light may so shine before  
men, that they seeing your discreet gouernement and good behaviour  
may (by your good examples) reforme many ill infirmities which they  
see in themselves. Alas, I pray you consider and remember, that as the  
tree groweth, so he falleth; we are not borne for our selues, but for our  
Countrie: and if we doe no good, though wee doe no harme, then better  
it were that wee had neuer beens borne. The figge tree in the Gospell, is  
said to trouble the ground, because he bare no fruite, and therefore bet-  
ter an addle Egge then an  Bird; for a good and a godly life, hath a  
good and a godly end, and an vngodly life hath an vngodly end: and  
therefore most happie dieth that man, of whom the world doubteth not of  
his saluation, although the world is giuen to speake well and charitably  
of the wicked when they are dead, and yet it may be they thinke in their



## The Preface to the Professors

minde they are gone to hell; then call to minde, and wisely consider of this, and also of your end, and in what great ieopardie your liues stand; for he that to day is well, lustie, and strong, may the next day, nay, the next houre, haue his life taken sodainely from him at vnawares, when he least thinketh on it, for many of this profession doe not liue out halfe their daies, for there is many waies to bring a man to his end, some by quarrelling when they haue no cause, and so are stabbed sodainely, and some by drunkennesse, as you shall heare anon; for I could write of many which came to their ends, and yet died not all in their beddes, nor all in the warres, nor all at the gallowes, and yet many of them haue gone these waies: for there are wicked and euill angells which are the wayters, and doe attend vpon an vngodly life, for Death respecteth no manner of person, for he doth assault the skilfull so well as the ignorant, the wise so well as the foolish, and therefore it is good for euery man to bee prepared and in a readinesse, and then hee needs not to feare to say, Come Lord Iesus, come quickly; to day or to morrow, or when thou wilt, and with what manner of death soeuer, so it come by thine appointment.

And now (for examples sake) I thinke it not amisse to renew your remembrance with the death of some few of the Noble Science, because I haue knowne their ends; and first, to beginne with that one of maister Turner, which should be the last, he did not so speedily kill Iohn Dun, with a thrust in the eie, but he was as soone murdered afterwards with a shotte of a Pistoll; for neither of them, after they had their deaths wound, spake one word; loe, by this you may see, that some hawkes are but a flight, and some horses are killed with a iourne, and a man is but a shotte; but now, by reason that Maister Turner, by his vnluckie hand, thrust out two or three eies, and because none others are knowne to doe the like, it hath therefore bred an admiration in the ignorant and vulgare sort, insomuch, that generally they doe applaude him with this commendation, saying that hee hath not left the like behinde him, nor neuer will be the like againe: But this is a great error in thinking so, and farre deceived are they; for I well knew Maister Turner by familiar acquaintance, and therefore (to speake the right) he was a worthy fellow and deserved well, but yet I know many which can goe so neare the eie as euer he could doe, if they solisted, as in this booke you shall see many false thrusts at senerall weapons, which may endanger

## of the Noble Science of Defence.

endanger any mans eies, if those which learne them doe carry enuious mindes, or if they were desirous to worke a man such a mischise, but God forbid that any man should be so ill minded. I will not say, but that by chaunce such a thing may be done, and so it may bee that Maister Turner did it more by chaunce, without any intention; for so some do iudge of it: but if a man choppe a thrust at the face, yet, by chaunce, he may hit the eye: for no man is certaine, that with the first thrust he will hit the eie, but with proffering many, by chance he may: now the vse which we ought to make of this, is, to aduise all men to take heed that they beare not a killing heart, for then we shall haue no killing hand, as that example more of Henry Adlington for killing his Maister Iohn Deuell, was hanged: Furlong he drunke a pinte of Aqua vita at one draught, and he fell downe and died presently: Westcoat, for some unkindnesse receiued of his owne daughter, he went into a wood neare Perine in Cornewall, and there hanged himselfe: Richard Caro, hee died most miserably of the French disease in an olde house neare Plimmouth, although he had a new suite of clothes from toppe to toe, yet hee was so loathsome a creature, that no bodie would let him harbour in his house, for part of his body was rotten and stuncke aboue ground: also old Carter of Worceller lay a long time sicke of a lingering disease, and being worne away to nothing but skinne and bones, hee died in his bed: and so of many more I could write, but it is not my intention to write a Chronicle, and therefore these few shall serue for this time, I wrote it but onely to put you in minde, that you may so leade your liues daily and hourly, as if Death were euen at your heeles, and so to liue as though you should liue for euer, alwayes keeping something for a rainie day, as saith the Prouerbe, that is to say, for sicknesse, if God doe send it, and for olde age when your aking bones doe refuse to performe that labour which the heart is willing to set them to.

Therefore I would wish euery one, in his youth, to provide and get himselfe a homely home, and to settle in one good towne or other, for a rowling stone gathereth no Masse; the Grasshopper cannot liue but in the grasse, and the Salamander dieth if hee goe out of the fire: therefore, spend not thy time in trauell from place to place, but keepe thy homely home, and there beginne thy spending as thou maiest continue, cutting thy coate according to thy cloth, and not spending all at one time, and haue nothing at an other to serue thy turne, as many of all Professions do.

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## The Preface to the Professors

Wherefore, you yong branches of this noble Art of Defence, of you I meane to speake, and unto you I doe make this earnest request, that you will bestow all your idle time, which too too many spend in idle companie, and in drunkennesse, such ill spent time, I could wish, that it were either bestowed in reading of good bookes, or in giuing good counsell vnto such yong men as doe frequent your company, teaching them besides skill with weapons, how to manage their weapons, and how, and when to appoint the field, but not vpon euery drunken quarrell, and chiefly of all, charging them from profaning the Sabbath day, drunkennesse, and all other vices belonging therunto, which makes their white soules so blacke as incke, stinking before God as it were the smoake of sulphure and brimstone: and thus doing will purchase you, not onely the loue of God, but likewise of all the world, and your good report will be in euery mans mouth, yea it will goe before you in your trauells, like as with an Herauld of Armes, or else like a speedy Poste, ouertake you wheresoeuer you goe, whereas on the contrary side, those which doe spend their dayes in drunkennesse, and leading their liues lasciuiously one misfortune or other happeneth vnto them, eyther by the losse of a limbe, or by the losse of an eie, or by the losse of their liues.

For I haue knowne many very skilfull men not only of this Profession, but likewise of others, which delight in vngodlinesse, drunkennesse; and being put to triall in their Art or Profession, they haue receiued disgrace and lost the day, and they afterwards haue thought that they made a good excuse, in saying that they were in drinke when they went about their businesse, and yet it may be it was not so, but admit it was so, then is it meere madnes, that any man should be so foolish in saking too much drinke when before hand hee knoweth this is the day, wherein I am to stand vpon my credite; now because I know, that many will reade this besides those vnto whom it is dedicated: therefore I wish all men, of what Profession soeuer, to make this reckoning (as aforesaid) euery day, and not to be forgetfull of that which hee should chiefly remember; for euery day one time of the day or other thou mayst be put so to thy shifts, and thereby haue an occasion to sommon up all thy wittes, and drinen to vse thy best skill, and yet all little enough to serue thy turne.

Wherefore vnto you which this any way may concerne, I wish you to apply your selues vnto your Profession, and still to be studying and practising the true and perfect rules belonging both to the true and false play,

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play, especially unto such weapons as you are not growne unto the full perfection before hand, if they may serue eyther for the wartes or for single combate.

Be not wise in thine owne conceit, in thinking that thou hast learned all the skill which is possible to be learned already, farre deceived art thou if thou thinke so, for if ihou live till thou art olde, yet thou mayest learne still, for one guard crosseth another, and the false play crosseth the true play; there are many secret slippes and guards to be inuented, and one guard or one tricke may more steade thee, and more preuaile against some men then another; for when with plaine play, thou canst not endanger thy enemy, yet with false play thou mayest hit him, for although thy enemy doe know the defence of some manner of false play, yet it may be he is not acquainted, neither with the defence nor offence of thine, for there is more wayes to the wood then one, and hee which knoweth many wayes, may goe the nearest.

Enen so, he that knoweth many guards, and the true skill at many weapons may be the better able to answer any stout bragging forreiner or stranger when they come with their challenges into our country, let them be of what nation soeuer, and as what weapons they will, and vpon what tearmes they dare, as hiterto they haue bene sufficiently answered during my time, by Maister Mathews, Maister Turner, Maister Bradshaw, and Maister Yates; for these chiefly stoode to stake against all commers, and yet I can not chuse but remember Maister Church, and Maister Brentley, who of this latter time haue deserved to be well reported of, and for aught that I could euer heare or see ariue get at any of their hands, they haue small cause to bragge of their winning, for they alwayes went away with shrewd shrubs and knockes, I meane with blacke eyes, broken shinnes, or cracks pates; but of my selfe I will say litle, because the world is sufficiently satisfied of more then at this time I meane to write of now, although the ignorant can not answer them for want of skill and iudgement, yet they will reioyce and clap their hands to see them answered by sufficient and able men of valour and iudgement.

Now if any should aske my reason, why some should haue such good fortune, and other some disgraced, and yet by the worlds iudgement their skill equall; because you shall not muse long about it, I will quickly tell you my opinion, good gouernement and good carriage is the maine point

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thereof,

## The Preface to the Professors

thereof, yet me thinks amongst the vulgar sort I heare some say, because two or three famous fellows are dead, that there will neuer be the like againe: but farre deceived are they which thinke so, for there hath not bene so good, but there may come so good againe: for as yet I neuer knew any man but he hath mette with his match, and therefore I wish euery one not to presume one steppe the higher, for any gift that God bestoweth on thee, neither to thinke thy selfe better then any man, though there are some which, for want of discretion, will disable others, onely to magnifie themselves, and thiinking thereby to make the world beleue there is none so good as they. Loe, this is the cause of many quarrells, and sometimes murders: Therefore speake not euill behinde the backe of anie man, nor dispraise no mans play nor workemanship, be it neuer so simple, doe not like other Tradesmen, which cannot line one by another, but with a kinde of grudging hatred, as the Hatter against the Hatter, the Shoemaker against the Shoemaker, and the Tailor would euen hang the Tailor by his goodwill, and so of all Trades the like; but I would gladly wish it otherwise of all Trades, but especially of this Profession, to be louing and kinde one to another, meeting together in their trauels, and like Birds of a feather holde together, and in brotherly loue embrace one another, and let it not be from the teeth outward, but from the heart inward, for you shall haue many others which will undermine you, and creepe into your secrets, and so runne betwixt one another with tattling tales, onlie to set you together by the eares, and then laugh at you when they haue done: Loe, thus an euill tongue is the cause of many a mans death: wherefore leaue and forsake all euill vices, though you feare not man in respect of your manhoode, yet feare to offend God for doubt of his iudgements, which vndoubtedly lighteth vpon all those that carelessly forget him.

For, as the greatest honour that euer came to man, was through skill in weapons, and the greatest downe-fall that euer came to man, was through pride of his manhoode; and in neglecting his duety towards God: wherefore, as you worthily carrie the stile or title of Maisters of Defence by your Profession, then be the same you seeme to be, I meane, neuer leaue studying and practising till you come to the ground, and vntill you haue sounded into the depth of your Art, for there are many other principall points belonging to the warres, besides, march, troupe, charge, and stand; euen so vnto a Maister of Defence belongeth the skill

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skill of many other weapons, besides backe-sword, sword and dagger, rapier and dagger, and the staffe: for, if hee bee not provided with the skill of many other weapons, hee may be to seeke of his defence, if hee should be challenged unto some other weapons which hee is vnacquainted withall.

Then hee is not worthie to be called a Maister of Defence, which cannot defend himselfe at all weapons, especially against euerie ordinarie man not professing the Art of Defence, nor except hee can play with a Lyon, as well as with a Lambe, and sometimes againe to play the Lambe so well as the Lyon; for hee that cannot tell when to spare, and when to strike; and hee which cannot defend himselfe, cannot teach others to defend themselves, nor is hee not worthy to be called a Maister of Defence, but he that can doe it is worthie of that title; and therefore greatly wronged of them which will call such a one a Fencer, for the difference betwixt a Maister of Defence, and a Fencer, is as much as betweene a Musitian and a Fidler, or betwixt a Merchant and a Pedler; it will not well please a Merchant to be called Pedler, yet the Merchant selleth the like wares as the Pedler doth: Is therefore a Merchant and a Pedler all one? No more is euery Fencer a Maister of Defence; nor euerie Fidler hath not skill in Pricke-song, and therefore no Musitian; if a man haue but tenne shillings worth of Pimmes, Points, and Inckle, hee may then be called a Pedler, but hee that hath a hundred sortes of wares, shall scarce get the name to be called a Merchant, no more can hee which hath gotten a little more skill at three or foure weapons then euerie common man, yet hee may be to seeke of the true skill of many other weapons which belong unto a Maister of Defence.

Yet one thing more, which I had almost forgotten; unto Schollers and unto Others of Schooles of this Profession, proffer no wrong to your Maisters neither in word nor deed, nor deny not your Tutors, but beare a heartie loue unto him which hath brought you from nothing to something, from a shadow unto a substance; Let not the Priest forget that hee was a Clarke. I haue knowne many Schollers so good as their Maister, and (it may be) better, according to the Prouerbe, A man may make his owne dogge bite him; but in my minde, such a dogge is worthy of a rope: make the application as you see occasion. For I haue knowne many an ungratefull knaue escape the gallows, by the meanes of an honest minded man; yet such a knaue (upon small or no occasion)

### The Preface to the Professors, &c.

hath afterwards gone about to hang such a friend if he could, euen so, some young lustie Schollers, when they haue gotten perfect skill, for lacke of witte, would offer to wrong their aged Maister, if they could: It is not strange to finde one scabbed sheepe in a whole flocke; nor is it no newes amongst many honest men, to finde a treacherous varlet, trayde of all honestie, feare, and witte. Now hauing no warrant to force you to follow my counsell, but onely in brotherly lone, I thought good to request you, and euerie of you, to amend one; and God amend vs all, he I meane, whose Seate is in Heauen, and whose Foote-stoole is the Earth.

Your well-willing friend,

Ioseph Swetnam.



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  5. The cause of quarrels, and with what preparation you ought to be prepared withall to answer a challenge.
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*Certaine obseruations for a scholler or any others.*

*The seuerall kind of weapons which are to be plaid with.*

*The authors farewell to Plimoth.*

*The authors conclusion.*





3 This first Chapter sheweth what  
*wepons are chiefly to be learned, with many other prin-*  
 cipall notes worthy obseruation.

**B**ECAUSE old weapons lyeth  
 rusty in a corner, and euery man  
 is desirous of the newest fashion  
 of weapons, especially if they  
 seeme to be of more daunger to  
 the enemy then the old, therefore  
 it is my intent & purpose at this  
 time to expresse and set downe  
 both the true and false play principally of the rapier  
 and dagger, and staffe, for I hold that the skill of these  
 two weapons are chiefly and necessary of euery man  
 to be learned, for to haue the vse of a rapier to ride  
 with, and a staffe to walke a foote withall, for those  
 which haue the skill of these two weapons may safely  
 encounter against any man hauing any other weapon  
 whatsoeuer as hereafter you shall be sufficiently satis-  
 fied.

But first a word by the way in commendations of  
 those two weapons, this I can say and by good expe-  
 rience I speake it, that he which hath a rapier and a  
 close hilted dagger, and skill withall to vse him hath  
 great ods against the sword and dagger, or sword and  
 buckler,

buckler, and the like I doe affirme of a staffe against all long weapons; my reasons shall follow anon; but first I will speake more in commendations of the rapier and dagger, note it well, for it is the finest & the comeliest weapō that euer was vsed in *England*, for so much cunning to this weapon beiongeth as to no weapon the like: wherefore I would wish all gentlemen and others, not onely to learne the true and perfect skill thereof, but also to practise it often. For there is no exercise in the world so healthfull to the body, and the skill of it a sure defence for the same, likewise it also behoueth euery man to be well instructed in this weapon, therather, and for because it is a weapon which for the most part all out-landish men doe vse; wherefore being vnprepared thou maist be the better able to answer them at their owne weapon either in single combat or otherwise, but if thou delay thy practise till thou hast need, then I say at the very time of need it will be too late, and little auailable to thee, for being learned in such haste it is soone forgotten, and he which neuer learned, but doth trust to his own cunning may soone lose his life, for there is but two wayes for the doing of euery thing; that is to say either a good or a bad, and commonly by nature euery man hath the worst way; both at this exercise and so at all others the like, but the best way being learned, by a little practise keepeth it so perfect, that it is neuer forgotten againe.

A Physitian is but little regarded, but in the time of sicknesse, euen so the practising of skill is not remembered vntill a man hath need to vse it. *Plato* was a Diuine, yet he so highly esteemed the art or skill in weapons, insomuch that he commandeth that children

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dren should learne so soone as they are able, and *Cyrus* saith that skill in weapons was as necessary as husbandry ; but now when you haue the true and perfect skill, be not ouer rash nor take not exceptions at euery light occasion, but onely by good aduise to vse it, in cases of necessity ; reuenge not euery small wrong, nor quarrell not vpon euery light occasion, for the strongest and the richest man that is, must pocket vp an iniury at sometimes, then be not hasty in thy wrath, but pause although thy weapon be drawne, for the thrust being giuen, and the blow once fallen, it will be too late then to repent ; wherefore be valiant, but yet not too venturous, so fight as thou maist fight againe, for the hasty man neuer wanteth woe, and he which will quarrell for a small matter trusting vnto his owne manhood, yet for all his skill and courage, may oftentimes meeete with his match, and so carry away the blowes with dishonor.

He that to  
wrath and an-  
ger is thrall,  
ouer his wits  
hath no power  
at all.

For a small or a bad quarrell hath many times ill successe, therefore let thy quarrell be grounded vpon a good foundation, for then it halfe defendeth it selfe, but if it be vpon drinke or in defence of a lewd woman, such quarrells are naught, and haue ill successe ; againe haue this care, neuer be proud of thy skill, but goe as if thou hadst it not, except occasion serue ; but be not lifted vp with a proud minde one step the higher, for curtesie wins fauour with all men ; wherefore all way so frame your speech and answers, that there neuer grow any quarrell vpon a foolish word or a forward answer.

A quarrell is  
oftentimes  
begun without  
discretion.

And furthermore, haue this skill in thy memory, so rule thy tongue as neuer to speake ill, whether it bee true or false behind the backe of any man, for if the

E

party

party spoken of be not in presence, yet he may heare  
 of it, and thou maist be called in question for the same  
 when thou thinkest least vpon it, yea although thou  
 suppose that thou speakest it to thy friend, for I haue  
 knowen many which to magnifie themselues would  
 boast and brag of their owne manhood, and disable  
 others, which were far better men then themselues;  
 thinking neuer to heare of it againe; but this one folly  
 hath been the cause of many quarrells, and thereof  
 springeth deadly hatred, and somtimes murders, Yet  
 I doe aduise all men if vndiscreet words doe passe  
 from the mouth of the simple for lacke of wit ( but I  
 will not say for lacke of drinke) but whether it be drink  
 or meer foolishnesse, reuenge not euery wrong, but  
 first consider the worth and quality of the party which  
 hath wronged thee, for if hee be a desperate person,  
 or one which hath nothing to loose, nor wife nor chil-  
 dren to care for, some such there are that are desperat,  
 and care not if they were out of the world, as our pro-  
 uerbe saith, hab or nab, fall backe fall edge, they care  
 not whose house is on fire, for they haue nothing to  
 loose, now although thou hast the perfect skill with  
 thy weapons, yet fight not with such raskalls, nor with  
 none vpon euery small wrong; for so thou maist be ac-  
 counted carelesse and bloody minded, as though  
*Mars* the God of battaile were thy Father, or think-  
 ing thy selfe to bee more mighty then *Hercules*, or as  
 one altogether forgetting that which so oft hath been  
 seen, that a little wretch of stature by skill, iudgement,  
 and reason, hath subdued and ouercome a far more  
 mightier man of person than himselfe.

Be valiant but  
 not to ventu-  
 rous.

As that of *Da-  
 uid* he ouer-  
 came great  
*Goliath*.

For he that is well instructed in the perfect skill  
 with his weapon although but small of stature, and  
 weake

weake of strength, may with a little moouing of his foote or a suddaine turning of his hand, or with the quicke agility of his body kil and bring to the ground the tall and strongest man that is.

Now before thou goe into the field to fight, first of all put God before, and vse thy deuotion to him priuately, and commit thy selfe wholly to his mercy, because hee redeemed thee, and the victory lieth in him, if thy skill and cunning were neuer so good; for

Forget not this lesson.

if thou goe with a sure hope and trust in God, and thy quarrell good, and some skill withall, then fight and feare not, and although at the first it will be fearefull to most men, being but once experienced therein, it will encourage and make a man bold, yet take this by the way, and note it well, for skill makes some men towards, for if thou learneest the best skill thou canst, and in a fence schoole meetest with one that is so good, and cunning as thy selfe, such a one will hit thee sometimes in spite of thy teeth, the which hit makes some thinke with themselues, I did now lye in as sure a gard as I could for my life, and yet if I had been in the field this hit might haue killed me.

Feare not if thou hast skill to answer a good quarrell for its better dy like a horse in battell then liue like a hog in a stile.

But I say there is great ods betwixt fighting in the field and playing in a fence-schoole, for in the field being both sober, I meane if it be in a morning vpon cold blood, then euery man will as much feare to kill as to be killed, againe a man shall see to defend either blow or thrust in the field then in a fence-schoole, for a man will be more bold with a foile or a cudgell, because there is small danger in either of them.

But when they come to tell their tale at the point of a rapier, they will stand off for their owne safety; go not into the field in the afternoone, partly for the

auoiding of the common speech of those which will say it is a drunken match; neither goe not presently vpon the suddain falling out; for choller ouercometh the wits of many a man, for in a mad fury skill is little thought vpon, and therefore very dangerous to both; for although thy memory serue thee well; and so thou being carefull and not bearing any mind to kill, yet thy enemy if he be but a ranke coward, vpon drink or fury, or vpon hot blood, will be so desperate, that if you fauor him he will endanger thee.

There is seldome or neuer any quarrell begun but in an afternoone, for then commonly the drinke is in and the wit is out, although thou knowest thy selfe in good case, and not to haue receiued more drinke then to suffice thy want, yet dost thou not know how little drinke will ouercome the wits of another man; and this I know, and by good experience I speake it, there is no ods during the time betwixt a madde man and a drunkard.

Neuer iest with edge tooles, nor play not the foole with thy weapons, but keepe them to defend thy selfe when occasion shall require thee, or at such time as thou shalt be oppressed, for many hurts and much mischief hath been done by ouer-much folly in iesting with weapons, when at the beginning there was no harme meant.

Euer refer the quarrell to be tryed in the morning, for then thy aduersary so wel as thy selfe being in cold blood, skill auaieth, and he which the night before would seeme to fight with the diuell, will in the morning be as cold as a clocke; for then it is the nature of euery man as well to feare to kill, as to be killed, and so thou by skill maist fight long without danger, and fight



fight with many, and haue no hurt.

When thou goest into the field, note the Sunne, for if it doe shine, it may annoy thee; but get thy backe toward the Sunne, and so trauerse the ground, that thine enemy get not about thee, so shalt thou alwayes keepe his face in the Sunne, which will so annoy him, that hee can not make play to endanger thee. But if there be no Sunne to trouble thee, then make choice of the lowest ground, for he which hath the lowest ground, hath the greatest aduantage. Also take heede that thou strike not with thy rapier, for so thou mayest breake it, and bring thy selfe to thine enemies mercy, and it may be he will take the aduantage of thee: If thy rapier fall out of thy hand, take thy dagger by the point, and make an offer to throw it, for that will so dare thine enemy, that hee will stand vntill thou hast taken vp thy weapon againe.

But if thou recouer thine enemies weapons, (as I haue knowne many let fall their weapons in fight) giue it not to him againe; if thou meane to fight with him any more for that time; for, to vnarme thy enemy, is more credite to thee, then to kill him. Neuer lend a weapon to fight against thy selfe, for these two follies haue beene the end of many good mens liues: if thine enemy fall, hurt him, if he will not yeelde vp his weapon, but kill him not, though his life do lie in thine hands, but if thou spare him, fight with him no more for that time; for I haue knowne many that might first haue killed, but by sparing their enemies, haue beene killed themselues; if thine enemies weapon breake, then there is fauour to be shewed: but these twoo last points are to be conditioned vpon. When any two Gentlemen, or other, whatsoeuer,

Of all dangers the least is to be chosen, and the greatest to be avoided: defend not one place, & leave the rest of the body vnguarded.

Take heede of ignorance pitifull, for feare lest you fall in to the springle with the wood cocke.

shall haue occasion to fight, yet it is not amisse, at their meeting in the field, for the one of them to say before they beginne, Shew mee that fauour which thou wouldest haue thy selfe, that is, if I fall, or my weapon breake, stay thy hands, and I will doe the like. Haue alwayes as great care to saue the life of thy enemy as of thine owne, fearing more the Iudgements of God, then the Lawes of the Realme. Likewise, neuer be too earnest in perswading a coward to go with thee into the field to fight; for I haue knowne a Gull that would abuse a man in words behinde his backe, but when he hath beene called to account for it, by the partie grieued, hee durst not answer him in the field, yet by earnest prouoking, hath gone and put a farre better man then himselfe to the worst.

Therefore I hold it very vnfortunate to perswade any man too too earnestly, to goe into the field to fight against his will; neither goe into the field with euery rascall, for thou dost hazard thy selfe, and gettest no credite, wherefore, if such a one do challenge thee, if thou canst conueniently, breake his pate, for he is worthy of somewhat for his forwardnes, but to answer him otherwise, let this excuse priuilege thee; say thou scornest to doe him that credite. Let thy rapier be of a reasonable length, rather too long then too short, foure foote at the least, except thine enemy doe giue or send thee the length of his weapon; then it is a point of manhoode to match him as neare as thou canst: alwayes let thine enemy tell his tale at the point of thy weapon; but trust him not to whisper with thee, lest hee shall stabbe thee, or else by strength recouer thy owne weapon, and so doe thee a mischief before thou be aware; keepe cleane thy rapier;

rapier; remember that of *Alexander*, how he cassied a Souldier out of his Army, because he was making cleane of his Armor, euen then when he should haue vsed it. Likewise there is a Prouerbe, A worke-man is knowne by his tooles: Then if thou hast skill to vse thy weapons, let it appeare by the cleanly keeping of them, then leaue not thy rapier in a wet scabbard, when thou comcest to thy iournies end.

Yet once more I doe aduise all men to take heede how they ieast or shew their trickes in trauell in their Chambers with their weapons, no though the scabbard be on; for by such foolith ieausting I haue knowen much mischief done, and sometimes murder, when there was no hurt meant at all; therefore I do wish the wiser to rule the other, so that a mischief may be preuented before it be done, for else repentance may come too late. Also in playing with sticks, without buttons, many (for want of skill) may loose an eie, as many haue done heeretofore. Many a man will say, That skill in weapons is good, and one of the principallest things that belongeth to a man, yet themselues altogether vnskilfull; in their youth they thinke it too soone to learne, and in age too late, yet when they are wronged, they would giue any thing, that they were able to answere their enemy without feare or hurt, as hee which is skilfull in his weapon may doe.

Goe not into the field with one that is knowne to be a common drunkard, no though thou take him neuer so sober, for if thou chance to hurt him, the vulgar sort will deeme that he was drunke, so thou dost hazard thy life, and get no credite, then take no exceptions at a Drunkards words, for what he speaketh

For it happens  
in an houre  
which happeneth  
not in  
seuen yeares,

is

is not regarded amongst men of discretion, yet many times it so falleth out, that a drunken madde-braine meeteres with a prodigall vnwise fellow, and they do quickly vpon a word, nay vpon a looke, make a soldaine brawle, to the disturbance of the rest of the company; for hee that will match a crooked dagger with a crooked sheathe, in seeking may finde one; euen so he that is giuen to swaggering and quarrelling, doth meet with his match sometimes, nay very often it so falleth out.

Also he is vnwise which will beginne a quarrell in a Schoole of Defence, vpon the taking of a knocke, as many do; for a man playeth, either to giue a knock, or to take a knock: but with skill a man may play a long time, and doe neither of them, except their fury doe ouercome their wittes; but hee which cannot arme himselfe with patience, by considering with himselfe the danger of his rashnes; let him spend all his idle time in practising in weapons, with one that is skilfull; for by vse of play, many a man commeth to know the danger of rashnesse, and so with a due consideration, doe thereby come to mittigate their furious affection, whereas an other sort of hare-braines (vpon very small occasion) will be alwayes ready, not onelie to breede, but also to maintaine any idle quarrell, whether it be right or wrong, in Faire or Market, Fence schoole or Tauerne, as many witleffe drunkards doe; for skill without discretion makes some more forward and desperate in maintaining idle quarrells, then otherwise they would be, whereas a man of discretion and gouernement will be no whit the prouder of skill, but goe as if he had it not, and amongst wise men he is accounted most  
valiant

valiant which brags least, and is maister of himselfe, in conquering his affections, and alwayes fore-casting the worst, before a mischief doth happen; for a common quarreller is like a common hackny, which is neuer without a galled backe; euen so a quarreller is seldome without hurts: let thy hands be slower then thy tongue, yet let not thy sword rust for want of vse, nor yet surfet with bloud, but after many threats in place conuenient vnsheathe thy sword, but yet do it with an vnwilling kind of willingnes, as not being too prodigall of thy bloud in mis-spending it idly, and yet grudge it not when occasion shall serue, either for thy King and Countrie, or in defence of thine owne reputation, but not in euery rashly brawle, nor in a great assembly, where manie times a foolish mad-braine, will draw his weapon vpon an idle quarrell; in such a place I haue knowne, that after one hath drawne, many haue likewise drawn their weapons for company, according to the olde Prouerbe, One foole makes many: But howsoeuer, in such a case I haue knowne much mischief quickly done, although many of them haue not knowne the cause, nor whom to strike, vntill it hath beene too late; but then when all is done, these great fighters, when it is too late, they would make enquire how the quarrell beganne, and vpon what occasion; but men of discretion and wisdom would examine the cause first, before they do vnsheathe their weapon: for in my minde, hee that vndertaketh such quarrells, sheweth neither manhoode, wit, nor valour, and contrary vnto all the Lawes of Armes; yet I will not say, but, where much people are, a man that meaneth no harme, may be wronged; but there

is no wisdom to right himselfe in a multitude : for feare of a mutiny , I meane in setting many together by the eares , but in a place conuenient thou maiest call him in question which wronged thee before , examining the cause of the quarrell , when the heate is past ; and then if you finde it but a pelting quarrell , being wisely considered vpon , and that it hath beene no great scandall vnto thy good name and credite , partly , because the match was made , and the field was appointed in a drunken humour , in such a case I say , it were a verie wise part , for the one of them to make a friend acquainted , which by wisdom may end the quarrell , before a further mischiefe be done : Nay more , I haue knowne as good a man as euer did draw sword , vpon an idle quarrell , hath himselfe gone the next morning to the house of his aduersarie , not making any friend at all acquainted with the busines , and hee hath thus said ; I am come to answer what the last night I promised , but yet withall , to tell thee , that our quarrell is but small , and beganne vpon idleneffe , yea so small , that I am loath to haue it come into the eares of wise men , lest they should account vs both fooles : now , for the auoyding of this and other daungers , it is not amisse for the wiser to offer this reasonable composition , though wee doe thinke him too weake for thee , for then thy credite will be the lesse in fighting with him , and yet if thou doe kill him , the danger is as great towards thee , as if thou diddest kill the best man in the world : now on the other side , say he is a man noted and knowne to be as sufficient a man as euer drew sword ; then I say , if an honest end can be made , without fighting , that is the best way . For if two men of warre meete



at Sea, they will not fight willingly one with the other, for they will consider before hand, that there is little else then blowes to be gotten one of the other: wherefore, if you be perswaded to end it with a boll of Wine, be not froward but yeeld vnto reason, if no friends know of the quarrell, then (as I said before) the wiser of the two may say vnto the other; Come, let vs goe and drinke our selues friends, let vs take a haire of the same dogge, which the last night did bite vs, and made vs madde, shall now cure vs and make vs whole; and so let vs smother vp this pelting quarrell.

But now, if the other be froward, and will not accept of thy reasonable motion, but will needs end it with weapons, then, rather then shew thy backe to thy spitefull enemy, let him see thy heart bloud: I meane, if he can get it, but there is no such danger in fight, except Skill and Discretion be wanting: wherefore rowze vp thy spirit, and what thou vnder-takest, doe it without rashnesse, and yet performe it without feare alwaies; in a good quarrell, if thou be ouercome, let thy heart yeelde last of all; and if thine enemy be not too rash vpon thee, it is a sufficient conquest, that when thou mightest hurt or kill, yet do it not, but stil weare Patience to the hard back, for by such victory thou workest thine owne peace; and he that thus doth, getteth himselfe credite.

As ther are many men, so they are of many mirids, for some will be satisfied with words, and some must needes be answered with weapons, and some are neuer well full nor fasting; therefore I would haue euery man fitly armed for his defence, what companie soeuer he keep, let him be armed with patience, still a

If the peace-makers are said to be blessed, then the quarrellers & make-bates are accursed.

We must not  
seeke reuenge  
one of an o-  
ther, because  
the Lord saith  
Reuenge is  
mine.

faire tongue, and a good weapon : so that if one will not serue, another must, rough or smoothe, as occasion serueth : for some are like vnto nettles, which if thou handle tenderly, it will sting thee, but if thou gripe it hard, thou shalt haue no harme : euen so, if thou giue vnto some men neuer so milde and gentle words, yet will they not be perswaded, but they will the rather deeme that thou fearest them, and so domineere the more vpon thee : but yet for all that, they are the children of God which desire peace, for the Prophet *Dauid* saith, *I seeke peace, but when I speake thereof, they are bent to warre, Psal. 120. 7.* Againe, there are many reasons to perswade one Christian not to fight with another. First, the King and Councell, haue, and still doe make strait Lawes, for the keeping of peace and for preuenting of murders; but about all, God expressly commaunds to the contrary, and if thou wilt not obey man, yet feare the displeasure of Almighty God about all.

Consider then and meditate thus with thy selfe before thou passe thy word to meete any man in the field; why should I go into the field, for when thou comdest there thou must not kill, for if thou doest, thou must looke to answer it before that great and fearfull Iudge which is the Iudge of all Iudges: howsoever thou by friendship or by pittie dost escape the hands of the Iudge in this life: Besides, thou doest loose thy goodes, which thy wife and thy children should possesse. Againe, when thou comdest into the field, and there calling to minde these dangers before spoken of, and so forbearing as being loath to kill: Then thy enemy, by sparing him, may kill thee, and so thou perish in thy sinnes, hauing small or no

time

time of repentance, and so thy death will be doubtfull, except thou diddest leade a very vpright life before, which may very well be doubted: for if thou diddest serue God aright, or fearest his iudgements, then thou wouldest not for any cause fight with thy brother.

Concerning this there is an excellent example of Patience shewed by King *Dauid*, in the second of *Samuel* 16.6.10. *Dauid* being in the midst of his Army, there came a fellow with cursing and rayling speeches, saying vnto him, *Come out thou murderer*, and withall, threw stones and dust at him: and one of the seruants of *Dauid* saide vnto his Master, *Shall I goe and take off the head of this Rayler?* But *Dauid* very wisely and mildely answered his Seruant thus, *It may bee that the Lord hath sent him, and therefore let him alone*: but now we haue a saying, That flesh and blood cannot endure such iniuries as heere you see *Dauid* did. But I say, those that will go to Heauen, must not looke to be carried thither in a feather-bed, but by enduring iniuries, crossings, vexations, and tribulations: O then thinke on Heauen, and yet forget not Hell; presume not, nor yet despaire not; Hue to die, and yet die to liue: Oh then leade thy life in true humilitie, for so shalt thou vndoubtedly escape Hels damnation, and enioy Heauens euerlasting saluation; which place the God of gods vouchsafe vs all.

## CHAP. II.

*Declarating the difference of sundry mens teaching, with  
a direction for the entrance into the practise  
with thy weapons.*



S men of all arts trades and sciences, differ in arte and workmanship, ( as for example ) all Physitions doe not vse one kind of purgation, nor all Surgions one manner of salue, nor al writers write not alike, but to make a rehearfall of all artes it were too long, my meaning is so many men so many mindes, euen so in this art of defence as the number which are experienced in it is infinite, euen so seuerall fashions doe exceede the number of infinite, if it were possible; for euery man holdeth his opinion to be best in that fashion which he hath been most vsed vnto; although a man shew them many errours by good iudgement, yet it is as hard to withdraw them from their owne wil as it is to compell a Papist from his religion, which he hath been alwayes trained vp vnto.

But the true skil of weapons once perfectly learned is neuer forgotten againe, for if any man were to fight for his life, as by a familiar example I will tell you of those which haue been vnskilfull, yet haue had a suddaine occasion to vse their weapons, and euen then suddenly summoning vp their wits, what defence they should vse for the safegard of their liues, being so suddenly charged, doth not hee then as I said remember himselfe of the best defence, or the best trick, that euer was shewed him, for then is the time to stand him in  
stead,

stead, and then will vse it, although he neuer plaid nor neuer practised in seauen yeeres before.

Nay further, he which neuer learned one tricke but what nature bestowed, nor neuer had any other experience vse nor practise at one weapon nor other, but onely what he hath seene of others, by chance, where hee hath hapned to come: yet such a one vpon a present occasion being vrged thereunto, will instantly cal to minde that such a time and such a time, I did see such a man fight or play, and he was accounted a very good player, or a very tall man of his hands, and thus he lay or thus he defended himselfe; Loe thus imitating for their defence that which they haue seene others doe before, another example which by experience I can speake of, and that is of some which neuer did nor neuer could swim in all their liues, yet such at sometimes haue been in danger of drowning, by chace falling ouer board into the sea, or into other deepe Riuers, where there was no hope of life but onely by swimming, such I say being put to their shifts, haue remembered themselues in the water, and so by laboring themselues I meane with their hands and their feet, so haue escaped and saued their liues. Now I say if euery man before hand were grounded in skill with his weapons, & in the art of swimming when they were yong, then would either of them be the lesse fearefull, for what is bred in the bone, will neuer out of the flesh.

Yet here one example more; take a yong plant, and set him, and come againe within a month, and you may pull him vp with ease, but let him grow a yeere or two and he will be so deepe rooted in the ground, so that you cannot pull him vp for your heart, except you vse other meanes: euen so of youth, if they giue their  
minds



minds to good and laudable exercises when they are yong, it were great pittie that they shold want encouragement, whereby it might take roote; but if their minds be giuen to any idle or bad exercises, it were good then that it were pulled vp in time, before it haue taken any deep root. And so I will here leaue off, because I shall haue occasion hereafter to speake concerning those matters.

## CHAP. III.

*Fearfull examples of murther, with aduise  
to auoid murther.*

GENERALLY three sorts of men are hated for the most part, and very much abhorred; that is to say, the proud minded man, a coward, and a murtherer, but especially a murtherer, howsoeuer it be done: therefore most vnhappy is he which killeth a man cowardly, in a desperate humour, but if he doe it in his owne defence, or in a morning vpon a iust quarrell in the field, and both being equally matched, then it may be the better tollerated both before God and man, yet I doe not well to say so; for *Romans* the 9. it is said, *what art thou which dost dispute with God*, then why goe I about to make my toleration in murther, when God hath giuen vs an expresse commandement to the contrary, saying, *thou shalt not kill. Exodus 20.* According to this saying, he which striketh with the sword, shall perish with the sword; and likewise *S. Paul* giueth vs a good lesson saying; *doe nothing without foresight and iudgement.* Because I touch diuinity in many places of my booke, no doubt some will say what should fencers meddle with diuinity; but to answer you

In no case  
commit not  
murther.



you againe, every Christian ought to know the word, (indeed the sword is good) but much the better when they goe both together. But to our matter againe: those which feare God, and by chance happen into the company of a murtherer, there haire will stare, and their blood will rise, that they will inwardly wish they were out of his company againe, for many simple men do feare a murtherer euer after they haue once known him to commit a murther, yet diuers honest men doe by chance happen into a murtherers company, when they would bee glad to shift themselves from him againe; or as it were to spue him out of their presence; in regard of his euill qualities, which is quarrelling, and taking exceptions vpon any litle occasion. If any man also doe seeme to contrary a murtherer, or a litle crosse him in his swaggering, he will forthwith breake out into these or such like vngodly speeches, saying; I haue killed a far better man than thy selfe; such like words will he say with a brazen face, and a stony heart, lifted vp with the pride of his manhood: for he that is a murtherer doth thinke that he is the best man in the world, especially if he escape the gallowes so long, vntill he hath killed two or three men: I haue been my selfe in company with many of them, but I did neuer see any fruit of repentance in them; for when they haue past the hands of the pittifull Iudge, then they thinke that they are cleered for euer, as well in this world as in the world to come; and then will they say if they did offend, they had the Law for it; but I know not how so many of them escape the gallowes: there is a Proverbe saith, *foolish pittie overthroweth towne and Citty*. I thinke and am verily perswaded, that a murtherer is accurst and hated both of God and man, yea I

Oh remember  
how the curse  
of God fell  
vpon Cain  
for murther.

am also perswaded that the house is accurst wherein they dwell, and the ship wherein they saile at sea, mark their end, and you shall see that although they passe the hands of men, yet God persues them with the hue and crye of his vengeance, which followeth them, and apprehendeth them, and bringeth some of them to one kind of death, and some to another; as these few examples following shal declare, and thou maist consider of them to thy benefit.

First Sir *John Fitz*: how wickedly and how cowardly did he with two or three of his men pursue and overtake Master *Stannell*, as he was riding from *Testok* in *Devonshire*, towards his owne house, this Master *Stannell* was beloued both of rich and poore, hee was a good and bountifull house-keeper, and his vntimely death was lamented of thousands, the occasion of the quarrell, was as I haue heard because Master *Stannell* called Sir *John Fitz* Tenant, for that sir *John Fitz* his father had vsed to pay him a matter of two shillings a yeere: this was no great cause of quarrel if it had been weighed in the ballance of discretion, considering the great loue and familiarity which had continued long time betwixt them, the which also was the reason that Master *Stannell* had not of long time demanded the rent, nor did make any reckoning or account of it. But then both hauing appointed to meet at a merry making in *Testok* onely to be merry, and there this vnforgotten word tenant proceeded out of Master *Stannell's* mouth, which sir *John* tooke in very great choller, Master *Sannell* perceiuing that hee had moued him betooke himselfe presently to his horse, and riding homewards hauing but only his footman with him, before he had rode two miles, sir *John Fitz* with

two or three of his men, being well horst ouer-tooke Master *Stannell* and there compassing him about som before him and some behind him, most cowardly and desperately murthered him; and vpon that sir *John* fled into *France*, but before one yeere was past his friends procured a pardon for him, insomuch that he came home againe, and to euery mans seeming was at quiet, but the hue and cry of Gods vengeance was in his conscience, and three or fowre yeeres after vpon *London* way there apprehended him, as you shall heare; for then and there most cruelly and diuelishly he killed his hoste, which was a very honest man, and afterwards most desperately with his owne hands tooke his rapier and murthered himselfe; yet thus much I can say of sir *John Fitz* he was a proper man, and for the space of thirty yeeres he liued orderly, to the gesse of the world, for he was well beloued in his country, and if he had so continued to the end, it had been well, but what should I say, a man may be an honest man thirty yeers, yea forty yeers, and yet be a knaue at the last.

Another example was that of one *Hocket* of *Plimoth*, who looking out at a window, and espying one Captaine *Robinson* comming downe the street, and he hauing an old quarrell to the said *Robinson* which began at sea, this *Hocket* stept to his dore with his rapier ready drawn, and standing within his owne house vntill Captaine *Robinson* was come iust against his door, he there without speaking one word ran him through with his rapier, and afterwards was cleered by the Iudge of this world, but after his comming out of the gayle, he went to sea, Master in a man of war, and within ten dayes after he was gone from *Plimoth* to sea, the

first ship they met withall shot but one shot, and yet killed this *Hocket*, and no man in the ship killed nor hurt but only this murtherer.

Likewise in *Plimoth* one Captaine *Treherne* and Captaine *Egles* fell out about nothing in a manner, the cause was for that one of them was denied lodging, where the other did lie by the good wife of the house, for it may bee she affected the one better then the other, and two dogs and one bone commonly can neuer agree well together, but they fell out about such a trifling matter, and at the doore in the streete they fought, and in the first bout, *Treherne* was downe in the gutter, and *Egles* there in presence of many might haue killed him, but staied his hand, and suffered him to rise againe, but then *Treherne* assaulted Captaine *Egles* most furiously, and it so chanced that with a blow *Egles* rapier brake, and then running into a house to saue himselfe, *Traberne* run him into the backe and killed him, and afterwards he receiued his tryall for it, but by the mercy of the Iudge he was discharged of that matter. After his coming out of the gayle, he presently got a crue of twenty eight persons, and a ship, and went a rouing vpon the coast of *France*, where they were all taken, and euery man of them hanged in *France*, now I doe verily perswade my selfe that many of them might haue been liuing at this day, if they had not hapned into this murtherers company.

Also, one *Bartles*, who appointed the field with an other, after one bout, his enemy requested him to holde his hands, that he might breathe, which hee consented vnto; but as they both stooode still, this *Bartles* lodainly charged his weapon vpon the other, and

and ranne him through, that he died presently, and then *Bartlet* fled and escaped away for the space of seven yeares, but the huy and crie of Gods vengeance followed him, insomuch, that hee came againe to Plimouth of his owne accord, thinking that all was well, and forgotten; but there he was apprehended, and after the law had had his course vpon him, Gods vengeance left him not, but brought him to Plimouth againe, and shortly after, another did challenge this *Bartlet*, they both mette in the field, and there was *Bartlet* killed, not farre from the place where he had killed the other before, and he that killed him, fled away, and is not taken as yet.

Now, to end these examples with the lamentablest historie that euer penne did write, for a more cruell murder was neuer committed, of king *Richard* the third, in the *Chronicles*, there may you reade it more at large, that after hee had committed his brothers two children to the Tower, hee was not contented, but would haue the liues of these poore Infants, the doers of this hellish and cruell murder, were sir *James Tirrell*, *Miles Forrest*, and *Iohn Dighton*, these three laying their heads together, what manner of execution were best to be vsed in that Tragedie, they concluded in the end, to stifle them in their beds in the dead time of the night, and so with the cloathes and pillowes which were about them, these three murderers pressing them downe vnder the cloaths (as aforesaid) bereaued them quickly of their liues; now, after this, what a hellish horrour had this King in his conscience, yea it so vexed and tormented his spirits, that he was neuer well nor at quiet sleeping nor waking; for in the night hee would sodainely start out

Remember  
this example.

If this make  
not your cares  
tingle, yet it  
may make  
your hearts  
tremble.

Fearefull visi-  
ons do haunt  
a murderer.



of his bed, and goe vp and downe the Chamber like a madde man; likewise in the day he neuer thought himselfe sure, but alwayes feared treasons, his eies rowling continually about him, and oftentimes hee would clappe his hand vpon his dagger, when there was no need, and afterwards he was vanquished with his enemies; and on the other three God shewed his vengeance somewhat in this world. For Sir *James Tirrell* was beheaded afterwards at the Tower for treason, but not for that matter; and *Miles Forrest* had a consuming and a lingring life, for his flesh did rotte away by peece-meale, and so miserably died; *John Dighton* liued in great hatred, and was abhorred and pointed at of all that knew him, and at the last died in great pouerty and misery. But I referre you vnto the Chronicle, as aforesaid, which declares it more at large: and so I will goe on a little further to the same effect.

Though the Law doe spare and not cut off a murderer so soone as hee hath deserued death; yet I say the horror of his murdering conscience will so bee gnawing at his bloody heart, vntill it hath eaten and consumed him to nothing; also the horrible paines of hell will by visions shew, and so plainly appeare vnto him, still sounding in his eares such a peale, that hee many times will thinke that the diuell is come from hell; for so long as hee liueth, his spirits will be so distempered and affrighted, that in the night, many times seuerall visions will appeare, sometimes spirits with vgly shapes, and sometimes a multitude of weaponed Officers russeling in to apprehend him, and sometimes the ghost of him which was murdered, insomuch that many times hee will sweare for feare,



feare, with running, labouring, and striving to keepe himselfe out of their gripe, and in a word, afraide he will be (in a maner) of every grasse; and whereas before he was accounted for a merrie companion, is now ouercome with wilde lookes and melancholie thoughts, taking no ioy, in wealth, wife, and children. Loe, this is a life, but it is as wearisome as hell vntill death doth catch him, for death waiteth vpon a murderer as a halter doth vpon the stealer; as for example of sir *John Gilbert* euer after the killing of sir *John Burrowes*, of which the world saith it was an honourable quarrell, and yet in the night his friends reported, that he would sodainely start out of his bed, being sore affrighted, he knew not at what, he liued not many yeares after, but yet died in his bedde; so likewise master *Heley* killed captaine *Foscue* vpon a sodaine quarrell, meeting in the streete in Plimmouth, yet, by the course of the Lawe, was acquitted for it; but afterwards, so long as hee liued, hee liued a discontented life, and was neuer well in his conscience vntill death tooke him. Now all these were but yong men, and in the middest of their yeares, to the eye of the world, either of them might haue liued many yeares longer, and yet not haue beene accounted for olde men.

I could spend much paper and time with a number of examples touching this matter, but I will here conclude, and leaue the rest to thy daily experience, which thine eares may heare, and thine eyes daily see (almost in euery place) farre more fearfull examples, concerning this former matter, the more is the pittie; but what becommeth of them after this life is ended may seeme doubtfull; but I leaue that to the secret wise-

wisedome and power of Almightye God; but there is no question to be made of those which leade a wicked and vngodly life, but they shall haue a wicked and an vngodly end; as on the contrary side, those that leade a godly and an vpright life, shall make a good and godly end: for if a man doe well, he shall haue well, but if he doe ill, he shall haue ill. More concerning this matter you may reade towards the end of the eight chapter following.

But I thinke it not amisse, heere in this place, to shew you alittle concerning murthers done in secret; for as the Proverb goeth, Murther will not be hidde; albeit for a time God doth suffer a murtherer to liue and reigne without apprehension, yet in the end he makes the diuell bring forth his seruant, to receiue his wages with shame enough, a murther can not be kept still close: for the Lord sometimes doth bring a murther to light that hath beene done in secret, by the birds of the aire, by water, by fire, by dogges, as in brieft by these examples shal plainly be demonstrated.

It hath beene knowne that a murthered carkasse hath beene throwne into the Sea when it was flowd to the full, thereby thinking, that with the ebbe he would haue beene carried away, but the water being gone, the murthered carkasse was found where it was first throwne in.

Also, I knew a woman that was arraigned and condemned, for murthering her childe, and well she deserved the same; for shee curte the childe into small peeces, and then she tooke and threw them vnder a hote furnace where she was a brewing: but when she had done brewing, and the fire out, there was found the

the peeces of the childe in the ashes, so fresh (in a manner) as it was throwne in.

Likewise, in Worcestershire were two brothers, the one a very honest man, and by his honest means and good industry, had gotten to himselfe a pretty house, and crownes in his purse. But his brother being a carelesse vnthrift, and enuying at his brothers prosperous estate, yet kept he it to himselfe, vntill finding opportunitie, one night (but they two being in the house together;) this gracelesse vnthrift forthwith knockt his brother on the head, which when hee had done, hee cutte off his legges, and buryed him vnder the harth in the chimney, and layd the stones againe very artificially, hoping then that all the goodes were his owne; and when the neighbors enquired of him for his brother, he tolde them that hee was gone a iourney farre off, to visite some of his friends. But (a short tale to make) this murtherer made a feast, and inuited his neighbours and his friends; and when they were all assembled together within the house, as they sate by the fire side, they perceiued the stones in the chimney to rise, and the fire tumbled downe out of the chimney, for the heat of the fire made the dead carkasse swell: and then search being made, the carkasse was found, and the murtherer taken and executed. God I beseech him blesse euery good man from murther, and from being murdered.

I haue knowne many times, that some (through ignorance) haue committed murther, in parting of a fray, I meane such as are not experimented in the Lawe, nor haue no reason in such a case; for many times they which should keep the peace, com-

H

mit

mit murther ignorantly, I meane, in comming in, either with club or halberd, or such like weapon, and comming behind one of the two that are in fight, striketh him on the head, when hee little expecteth any hurt of any other, but from him which hee is now in hand withall, when indeed in such a case, they ought to strike downe the weapons of those which are fighting or breaking them, but not strike them. Whose mindes are occupied with fury one against the other, and little expecting a mischiefe to come from one which they neuer offended. Againe some in parting of a fray will run in betwixt them, and hold his familiar friend, and leaue the other at liberty, and by this meanes he which hath been at liberty hath killed him which is so holden, when many times it had not so fallen out, if they had been both let alone to shift for themselves, therefore men ought to haue experience and to vse discretion in the parting of a fray, for fools do neuer fore-cast of a mischiefe before hand, but wise men preuent it before it falls.

Wherefore I would wish whatsoeuer thou bee, which readeest this lesson, to remember it, and regard the life of a man, although many are at some times very vnruely, yet let no abuse cause thee to commit murther, neither in thy owne quarrell, nor in parting of any other: for I haue heard and knowne many times that a small stroke hath been giuen with no intention of murther, yet it hath fallen out to the contrary, yea and contrary vnto all mens expectation, which haue seen that a man with his fist or with a riding rodde, or with a penny loafe, and other things of lesse danger, and yet some haue dyed being stricken therewithal.

CHAP. IIII.

*which sheweth unto whom skill belongeth, with  
the fruits of drunkenesse.*

**M**Any will say that skill in weapons is a good thing, and fit to be learned of euery man, yet all men will say it is pittie that a man without gouernment should know the secret skill in weapons, for indeede

He which can  
gouern him-  
selfe is wise,  
but that must  
proceed from  
God.

skil doth most chiefly of all belong to a man that hath wit and discretion to gouern it, that when he hath skill knoweth how to vse it as it ought to bee vsed, for a good thing learned and abused were better refused and neuer learned: for some when they haue a little more skill then euery common man, then will they thinke by brauing euery man which commeth in their company, by swaggering it with proud brags and high lookes, yet I haue known such swaggering companions which haue had more haire then wir, meete with their match and carry away the blowes with disgrace, and yet themselues beginners of the quarrell when they might haue liued quiet if they would.

Therefore he which weareth the greatest whistle is not the best Mariner, nor he the best man that makerh the greatest brags, for some will braue a better man then themselues, and swagger it out, and yet so little in themselues that they will scarce hold the touching when they come to the stone to bee tryed, yet euery subiect ought if occasion serue to fight for his King and cuntry, if it be for the Gospells sake, and sometimes in defence of their owne reputation and credit.

H 2

Now



Now although this art of defence is so fit and necessary a thing for all men to be learned, yet withall I doe exhort and earnestly intreat all such as haue skill to vse it in that fashion as it ought to be vsed, for if a man had twenty good qualities & yet if he be a drunkard, that one ill quality ouerthroweth all the rest, like as when a Cow giueth a good sope of milke, and then afterwards striketh it downe with her foote: she is as much to bee blamed for the losse, as commended for the gift, euen so a man without gouernment groweth out of fauour both with God & man, for many a man without discretion and iudgement many times doth fall out with his familiar friend, and so dare one another into the field, presently vpon the suddaine falling out. Now if wit be in neither of them, then a thousand to one but murther is committed, for a man with skill may better fight with a hundred in the morning one after another, then with three in an afternoone, vpon drinke or hot blood; for if you forbear to kill thou maist be killed thy selfe, if thou take thy opportunity thou maist easily kill a drunkard in his owne comming in, for he will come in without feare or wit: for drinke maketh a very coward challenge the best man liuing, for in drinke I haue knowen many passe their words to meeete in the field vpon small occasion, if with discretion the quartell were rightly considered vpon; but their owne selues in the morning when they haue their right wits about them, then do they many times repent, and with the match were to make, and that their words were vnspoken which they spake the night before. Yet neuerthelesse when a man hath passed his word howsoeuer things fall out, hee must and will answer.



swer the challenge, yea though he loose his life by it. Loe these are the fruits of drunkennesse, al other vices may be left, but no bridle will rule a drunkard, nor no counsell will make him forgoe his drunken and swinish life, drunkennesse is the mother of all vices, for drunkennesse doth beget and breede all manner of deadly sins, for by inordinate drinking thy soule is endangered, thy body is infected, thy vnderstanding banished, thy manhood distasted, thy substance wasted, and beastlynesse resembled, and thy businesse neglected, therefore leaue that one vice, and all other will flie away with it: for as I said before it is the only breeder and maintainer of quarrelling and fighting, by fighting God is displeased, and the Kings Lawes broken; againe if murther be committed, thou loosest thy goods, and endangerest thy life; if thou loose it not, yet thou shalt liue despised, & hard of all honest minds that knowes thee, so that thy life will be more loathsome then death, therefore not to fight at all is best, except thou be charged vpon contrary to thy expectation, then defend thy selfe, and yet feare as much to kill as to be killed.

CHAP. V.

*The cause of quarrells, and what preparation you ought to be prepared with to answer a challenge.*

**D**issention, quarrells, and murther growes many times vpon small occasions, yea so small, that when it commeth to the eares and to bee disputed vpon amongst the the wise, when they haue skand it ouer yeelds vp their verdit, saying such and such are fallen

Be wel aduised  
before thou do  
passe thy word,  
for a man will  
be as good as  
his word, if it  
do cost him his  
life: for it is a  
cowards trick  
to crie *peccani*,  
or least in fight  
the next mor-  
ning.

out for the value of a rush, and such and such haue killed one another for iust nothing, is not heere more madnesse? yet I will not say but at one time or another a mans reputation may be so neerly touched, that it cannot stand with his credit to pocket it vp, although it be made vpon drinke, for indeed the pot is the chief cause almost of all quarrells, yet being wronged, it can not stand with a mans credite, to keepe his weapon in his sheathe; neyther doe I counsell all men to pocket vp all iniuries which some will proffer them, but to answer a good quarrell, not onely with words but with deeds, as followeth; for the further instruction. Whoso is honourably challenged vnto single combate, the challenged may make choice of his weapon, and likewise of the time when, and of the place where.

Likewise, the challenged may choose to fight on foote or on horse backe, which for his best aduantage hee shall thinke fittest: now also the challenged is to consider well the qualitie of the Challenger, that thereby hee may make the better prouision of such furniture as may serue for his owne defence, and likewise to terrifie and hurt the challenger.

Now, if the challenger be chollericke and hastie, then charge thy poynt directly vpon him, that if hee prease vpon thee, he may come vpon his own death: but before thou goest into the field, discharge thy duty and conscience towards God, as well as in weapons, for thy best aduantage, otherwise it can not choose but be to thy body dangerous, and vnto thy soule doubtfull, and a most principall note is this to be obserued, for thou art not sure whether euer thou shalt returne againe or neuer.

Remember

Remember your skill, when you are at play, or in fight, for I haue knowne many, when their fight and play is ended, they doe remember, that with this tricke, or with that tricke they might haue defended themselues, and eicher hurt or disgraced their enemy, but many (through madnesse and fury) remember it not till it be too late.

If you be both skilfull in the false play, then I hold it good for both to play vpon the true play, for it booteth but little to vse false play to one that knowes how to proffer it, and how to defend it; for it is ill halting before a Cripple, yet I will not say but the best of all may be deceiued by false play, but especially false play may stand thee in great stead, vpon those which are not come vnto the full perfection of knowledge: Againe, one may haue skil in one kind of false play, but not in all.

Now whether thy enemy be skilfull or not, it is a very easie matter to know so soone as hee beginneth to charge his weapon, if thou haddest no former knowledge before hand. If two crafty knaues meete at dice, if either of them shift in false dice, the other will perceiue it presently, and so they will know each other to be gamesters, but they will giue ouer the sooner, with small losse each to other, referring themselues to their better fortunes, and hoping to meete with easier gamesters; euen so I wish all men, if they perceiue themselues to be hardly matched, the wiser of them to yeelde vpon composition, after reasonable triall made each one of the other, before any great hurt be done; for the best man that euer breathed, hath, and may meete with his equall: and when two good men meete, the conquest will be hardly  
and

and dangerously ended on the one side, except Discretion be a mediator to take vp the matter, before it come to the worst, if by friends it be not ended before hand; but if thou canst hurt thy enemy, yes, although it be but a little, or vnarme him of his weapon, which thou mayest very easily doe, if thou doe fight with good discretion. And eyther of these are accounted for a victorie; also, take this for a generall rule alwayes, keepe thy bodie within compasse of true Defence, considering otherwise, that the danger is great in that part of the bodie which lieth most discovered, and is nearest vnto thine enemy.

Now when thy enemy doth assault thee, and is lifting vp his weapon to discharge at thee, be not then to prepare thy Defence, but be ready before hand to defend euery part of thy bodie, according to my directions, as when you come to it you shall see more plainly. For thou dost not know before hand where the blow will light: As shrinking vp of shoulders is no payment of debts, no more will winking or blinking defend thy carkasse, as those which haue no skill will winke: therefore, againe, and againe, I say, bee prepared with skill before hand. Most sure it is the blow must haue his fall: but at euery weapon I haue shewed how to defend it, therefore the Defender must bee well experienced before hand with his defence, at such a weapon as he meaneth vsually to carrie, that when the blow doth light, thou mayest bee in thy defence, not to defend thine enemies blowe onely, but also to answer him againe in the time of aduantage, for a quicke answer sheweth good cunning. Nor to know the true place for the holding of of thy weapon, that is not all, but alwayes so long

as thou art within thy enemies danger continue them in their place, except it be at the very instant time when thou goest about to offend thine enemy, and that must be done with a very good discretion, and thy weapon must bee recovered vp againe into his place nimble. Now if thy enemy doe discouer some part of his body, that, to thy seeming, lieth very open, yet be not too hastie in offering play, though the baite be neuer so faire, bite not at it too rashly or vnadvisedly, lest like the foolish Fish you be taken with the hooke which lieth couered with the baite; for if your enemy finde your weapon or weapons out of the place of true defence, yea if it be but an inch too high, or too lowe, too wide, or too narrow, it is asmuch as concerneth thy life: if thou be matched with one that is skilfull, neuer ouerlay thy selfe with a heauy weapon, for nimbleness of bodie, and nimbleness of weapon are two chiefe helps for thy advantage in play. Againe, and againe I say, strike not one blow in fight, at what weapon soeuer thou fightest withall, except it be a wrist blowe, and that you may aswell doe with a rapier, as with a sword, for a wrist blow consumeth but a little time, yet better vse no blowe at all, but continually, thrust after thrust: for (in my minde) hee is a man ignorant and very vnnskilfull that will bee hurt with a blow, and if thou make an assault vpon thy enemy doe not tarry by it, to maintaine it, for in making the assault distance is broken, wherefore recover backe into your guard and distance againe so soone as you can, and alwayes let your ees be on your enemies face, and not altogether on the point, then you may be deceiued, by the swift motion of the hand, for the motion of the hand is swif-



ter then the eye or foot, many will set their eyes vpon their enemies point, or vpon his hand for the auoiding of this error, the best remedy is daily exercise and practise one with another, and to play with more then one, otherwise thou wilt neuer come vnto true defence for it is good to be acquainted with euery mans fashion, for that trick which will hit one will not hit another, and therefore be well experienced not onely in the true play but in the false, I meane for the defence and offence of both, that if thou canst not preuaile with the one then vse the other: yet take heed of hasty aduenturing in, least thou with the foolish bird which flyeth into the lime bush, and being in, the more she strueth, the faster she is; then make no more hast then good speed, least thou be taken in thy owne folly, for many times haste maketh waste: if thou shootest at a marke if the marke be neuer so faire, yet if thou shoot hastily without discretion, thou maist oftner misse then hit; also I doe aduise thee not to determine to answer euery thrust or blow home which thy enemy doth assault thee with; but to answer it something short vntill thou perceiue whether he haue any false play or not, otherwise if thou make thy answer home, he may deceiue thee by false play: now if both be experienced in the true play and false then you might continue in fight a whole day, if it were possible to endure so long and haue no hurt: if thou haue a close hilted dagger and a rapier, I hold them more surer then a sword and dagger, but with the skillfull there is no danger in either of them; againe in fight a man need not vse halfe the skil which he may learne, the second point of hawking is to holde fast, and the second and chiefest point in this exercise is to learne to defend thy selfe, and to vse



vse it when thou hast occasion, then remember where about thou art.

And let no illusions cause thee to looke about thee when thou art within thy enemies distance, least hee take the aduantage when thou dost not see him, or before thou be aware, as many doe : for after when thou hast the wound, it is but a folly for thee to say, I had thought he would not haue stricken me so cowardly : I remember a tale as I heard out of *Germany*, thus it was, the Master and vther of a school had vpon occasion appointed the field, and their weapon was each of them a two handed sword, and meeting at the place appointed, said the Master thou art not so good as thy word, the Vther asked him why ; marry said he thou promist to bring no body with thee, and yet looke yonder what a number of people are comming towards thee, the vther no sooner looked about, but the Master smote off his head, and afterwards meeting with some of his friends said, I haue taught my man a new tricke this morning said he, which he neuer learned before. Loe thus he killed him by policy, but it was no manly tricke, neither doe I commend this manner of murther : in my mind the Master had been better that he had denied to goe into the field with his man, then to haue such a clog of murther vpon his conscience by killing of him, by what meanes or policy soeuer, for euery one ought to remember that he must not take vengeance, when and where he may, so oft as an inury is profered him, concerning this there is a good example to bee imitated by strong beasts which neuer turne againe when little curs runne barking after them, for the mighty or skilfull ought to vse their power moderately, for so they may the better vse

continually, for although fighting be the triall of cunning and skill in weapons, and many men thereby prooue their force, and yet afterwards become great friends, for fighting is nothing dangerous being both wary and skilfull: but now in my mind much deceiued are those which thinke that a quarrell begunne with words cannot be ended but with weapons, but my opinion is that so long as no blowes passe but ouely words, yet words are the cause of many quarrells, for words will sting worse then a nettle, and pricke deeper then a thorne, and cut more keener then a sword, yet for all that let wisdom and reason guide thy hand and after you haue crossed one another with two or three crosse words, then fall into a ciuill kind of reasoning the matter, and not in fury suffering it to grow into any further quarrell, for a little sparke at the first is easily quenched, euen so vpon the drinking of a cup of wine or a pipe of Tobacco, or vpon such a light matter of no importance many a quarrell is begun; now in such a case I would wish the wiser of the two in his good discretion, to yeeld first, and so to end it without further grudging, for reasonable speeches may be a full satisfaction where a small offence is committed.

But now if one of the parties in a stubborne forwardnesse will not yeeld but rather goe into the field with a desire to kill the other, now if there be neuer a one of them wise, murther is committed and at leisure repented: but he which first beginneth the quarrell, or giueth the first box on the eare, rashly or vnadvisedly, vpon a small matter as- afore said, is worthy and well deserueth to be answered againe with three, or else with the bastinado. And to match with this I will tell you

you a tale of a Frier, who in his sermon said if one giue thee a blow on the one eare, turne the other and take another, and a lusty seruingman hearing him, after the sermon was ended, hee came vnto the Frier and said, sir you made a good Sermon, but yet in my mind there was small reason in one lesson that you gaue vs, what was that said the Frier, marry quoth the seruingman that if one giue me a blow on the eare, I should turne the other, and take another: why saith the frier the Scripture commaundeth vs so to doe, but quoth the seruing man will you follow the scripture herein, yes marry that I will said the Frier, with that the seruing-man vp with his fist and gaue him a good boxe on the eare; the frier turned the other, and tooke another, but now saith the Scripture ( quoth the Frier ) looke what you would haue others do to you, doe the like to them; looke what measure you meate, the like measure shall be measured to you againe, with heape and thrust, and running ouer, and with that the Frier tooke a good crab-tree cudgell and beat the seruingman well fauouredly, and so to our former matter againe. Dorth euery blow that is ginen deserue the answering in the field, I say not but first requite the blow againe, as before said, for I haue valued the rate of the first beginner so low as may be, for he is worthy to be required, not in the same manner, but in a more open fashion, requite the boxe againe, and then being equalled of the first wrong; let him which beganne the game reckon of his penny-worths, and if in casting vp his reckoning hee finde himselfe a looser, let him sit downe by his losse, and learne to make a wiser bargain an other time; but if it cannot be so ended, then it must be answered otherwise as occasion shall serue.

Now if the lie be giuen before you grow into chol-  
ler with a rash foolish fellow ; first , consider in what  
case the party is , which giueth the lie , before thou  
strike ; for in drinke or in furie I haue seene one giue  
the lie , which would not haue done it at an other  
time , I meane when hee had his right wittes about  
him . Well , but say a man , at such time , and in such a  
case , doe giue the lie , some mad heads will say , that  
it deserueth the stabbe presently ; but I neuer knew a-  
ny man stabbe or kill another , vpon what occasion  
soeuer , but he was sorie for it afterwards : That ma-  
riner is not to be commended which getteth his cun-  
ning by many ship-wrecks ; nor that man is not to  
be praised for his gouernement which getteth it by  
his punishment , which he hath for the killing of two  
or three men .

Therefore doe  
not that to day  
which may bee  
repented of to  
morrow.

Now , vpon the receiuing the lie , if the stabbe be  
not giuen , some giddie headed kill-calues will say ,  
that such a man tooke the lie , and did not answere it  
with a stabbe , wherefore hee is a coward ; but now I  
say , and this is my opinion , he sheweth the best wit,  
and most valour , which seeing a man out of the way ,  
(as we terme it) will giue a milde and a quiet answere  
vnto a froward question : also the wiser sort will com-  
mend the patience of him that can beare with one  
that is past reason ; for all men know , that hee which  
committeth murther , will afterwards wish with bitter  
reares , that hee had conquered his affections , and  
stayed his handes , I meane , if there be any sparke of  
grace at all in him ; and the first which striketh , many  
times looseth his life , therefore though thou cannot  
rule thy tongue , yet haue a care to rule thy hands be-  
fore a mischief be done , for hee which committeth  
mur-

murther, when hee commeth to examination, it is but a simple excuse to say, The other gaue mee the lie, and called me knaue, and I could not brooke it. There is a prety example, and worth the noting concerning such a matter (as I haue heard it) and thus it was. A Iudge sitting in iudgement against a murderer, who answered for himselfe saying, and it please you my Lord, hee gaue mee the lie, and called mee knaue. Why said the Iudge, wilt thou kill a man for that? call me knaue, and giue me the lie: the Iudge being importunate, in the end, the murtherer said, You are a knaue, and you do lie; then the Iudge tooke the skirt of his coate and thooke it, and said, Lord, now what am I the worse? but euerie man can not be so patient: although some will keepe company seauen yeares, and yet neuer giue any cause of quarrell: yet some againe will vpon alittle drinke, or vpon a small occasion quarrell, swagger and fight almost in euerie company they come into; there is a Prouerbe goeth, He which hath an ill name, is halfe hanged: Before he commeth to the Barre, another Prouerbe touching our former matter saith, Hee which is accounted for an earely riser, may lie a bed till eleauen of the clocke: euen so hee which hath tried his man-hoode, afterwards the world will iudge and say, that he is a man of his hands, and that he dare fight vpon a good occasion; but if he make a common occupation of fighting, hee will then bee accounted for a common quarreller, and his friends will refuse his company many times for doubt of his quarrelling, and yet hee shall neuer be accounted, more then a man againe. Hee which is quarrellsome shall oftentimes meete with his match; but if a tried fellow doe



at sometimes forbear when hee is wronged or challenged, the wiser sort will neuer account the worse manhoode in him; therefore except it be vpon a most open and great abuse, let Patience be thy buckler, and a faire tongue thy sword, and alwayes haue a care in the beginning what wilbe the end; for a mischiefe sometimes happeneth in an houre which happeneth not in seauen yeares againe, but Oh thrice happie were that man, which towards the latter end of his dayes, can without a paire of lying lips say, I thanke my God, I neuer bare malice, nor I neuer iniurioufly wronged any man, in thought, word, or deed in all my life.

## CHAP. VI.

*Diuerse reasons or introductions to bring thee  
the better vnto the knowledge of  
thy weapon.*

**I**F thou doest meane to practise after my direction, then put thy weapons in their right place, looking not onely to the picture, but to the words going before and after, likewise, frame your head, bodie, foote, and hand, according to my direction (as it followeth) after the first picture; for if either your weapons, or any part of your bodie be out of their place: yea, though it be but an inch too high, an inch too lowe, too wide, or too narrow, it is as much as your life is worth; If your enemy be very skilfull and willing withall: therefore, when thou goest to practise, reade it aduisedly, with vnderstanding, for I could  
haue



haue made a great Volume, in describing many sorts of guards at euerie weapon, but it would haue beene an intricate peece of worke, and needelesse for euery common man to know.

For as some Scriueners can write twentie kinds of hands, yet one or two will serue the turne; but the more sortes being well written, are the more to bee commended, but to haue an entrance into many, and not to doe one well, is not worth commendations: euen so one guard perfectly learned at euerie weapon, may serue thee for thy true defence whilest thou liuest, against all other guards.

It is but little auailable to thee, if thou see a good Scriuener write, except thou take the penne and practise to write, as hee doth; euen so, it booteth thee but little, that wouldest be skilfull of thy weapon, if thou dost see two skilfull men play except thou take weapons and practise to do as they haue done before thee.

Againe, it is not enough for him that would write well, to write his copie but once ouer, and so leaue, no more must thou, if thou wilt haue skill in thy weapons, thou must not giue ouer with playing of one bowt, but thou must exercise it many times, and practise it often.

And if a man write well, and exercise it neuer so much, yet hee can neuer exceed, well written; euen so in skill of weapons a man may be perfect, and play well; but when thou hast learned the true and perfect skill with thy weapons, thou maist exercise for thing health and recreation, but thou shalt neuer passe that word, well plaid.

Also, he which writeth much, and doth not regard  
K his

his coppie, but writeth after his owne will, I thinke it were strange for such a Scholler to write well, but he will alwaies write a ragged hand: euen so hee that getteth him hilt and cudgells, and goeth about to learne of his owne head without direction of one that is skilfull, it were better that he had neuer played, if afterwards he goe to learne; for he must first vnlearne that which he hath learned, which will bee very hard to be done without great paines taking.

Now he which writeth a good Secretarie hand, and then afterwards he goeth to learne Roman hand, or Court hand, or any other the like, hee doth not thereby loose his Secretary; but if hee can write all kinde of hands, then may he vse most, that which hee liketh best, or thinketh fittest: euen so, he which hath (by his practise) gotten good skill, and yet being of an other mans teaching, it is of an other manner of teaching, and I will not say but that it may be so good or better then mine: yet hee which learneth my rules or followeth my directions, it can not hinder him any whit at all, but if hee haue once gotten them by good and perfect practise, if hee like them not, may goe to his olde fashion againe, or learne of any other afterwards.

Yet againe, as the obseruing of a true distance in a Scriuener betweene euery line, is commendable in his writing, so it be done without ruling of it, which commeth by much practise; euen so in true skill in fight, distance is a most excellent thing, and the principallest thing of all, next vnto the guard to be obserued and kept, and it must be gotten by great practise.

Again, when you learne to write at the first, you  
write

write leasurely, but with much practise your hand cometh to be swifter; euen so, with often vse of thy weapon, thy hand will come to defend either blow, or thrust more readily or more speedily then at the first beginning of thy practise, albeit thou be shewen how to defend; and though thou haue the reason perfectly in thy head, and knowest when an other doeth it well, yet without practise thou canst neuer be skillfull in defence of thy selfe.

Also, hee which writeth, and with his penne doth sputter his paper with incke, a Scholler will thinke, if it be not a great blot, it is a small matter, but a Scriuener will say, it is a great fault; euen so, if thy weapon or any part of thy body be out of the right place, yea, though it be but a little, yet it will seeme to him that hath skill, as much as a great blotte doth to a Scriuener in a coppie Booke.

Moreouer, he which learneth to write, must continually looke to his coppie, and must write according to it; for one letter, or one line well written, is better then a great deale of incke and paper spoiled, and not one letter well made: euen so, one blow, or one thrust performed orderly, I meane, in his due time, and likewise to the right place, is better then an hundred vnorderly done.

Furthermore, if in writing an Obligation, a Scriuener doe write one letter of Roman hand, and another of Secretary, another of Court hand, it will not be seemely, nor commendable, but with what hand you beginne with, to end with the same; euen so you may frame your selfe, sometimes into one guard, and sometimes into an other, taking heed alwayes, that you obserue the same defence which belongeth

to the guard; for if you are in one guard, and you vse the defence of another, so you may deceiue your selfe (for euerie guard differeth in defence and offence) and berwixt euerie blow, and euery thrust, and euerie guard which I haue heere described in this Booke: there is as great oddes as is betwixt Secretarie hand, Court hand, and Roman hand: nay the seuerall difference of guards are more in number then there are seuerall kindes of hands in writing, yea many more then any Fidler can play lessons vpon his instrument, and the nature of the guards do differ as much as one lesson from another; wherefore those that thinke one defence serueth for defence of all guards, are asmuch deceiued, as they that thinke there is but one kinde of lesson to be played vpon all instruments: for that seuerall kindes of lessons are to be played vpon all instruments are infinite; euen so, the seuerall guards for defence and offence are not to be numbred; for, betweene the true skill in weapons, and the false, are an hundred of each at the least, and the contrariest and the most vnseemely, euery man hath by nature, but the best and surest way is to be learned by Art of them that are skilfull; wherefore see euery mans iudgement. For as thou mayest heare at one Sermon that which thou shalt neuer heare againe, euen so thou maiest learne of one teacher, that thou canst not learne of another: for euerie one that praetiseth naturall play without direction of one that is skilfull, such a one in his praetise, will haue one foolish trick or other: which when they haue by common praetise long vsed, will hardly be withdrawne from it: as for example, some will be setting their foote vpon their weapons, as if it were to stretch him when hee was  
right

right before, but they do it of a foolish custome that they learne of themselves: likewise, some will pufse and blow like a broken winded horse when they are at play, and some will daunce and keepe a trampling with their feete, and some will flourish and wauer with their weapons, some will whistle, and some will be blabbing of spittle in their mouthes, and putting out their tongues, and some againe will runne about as though they could stand on no ground, and it is as hard to wrest or driue them from such vnseemely customes, as it is to driue a dogge from a peece of bread.

Yet many doe not see it in themselves, but vnto the skillfull, which beholde them, it will seeme very vnseemely, and by nature, euery one hath the woorst way; as for example, there are but two wayes for the bowing of the head, either to the right hand, or to the left, and by nature, euery one doth bow him towards the left side, rather then to the right side; and there is very great oddes betwixt the right and the wrong in true defence, as I haue described in my reasons more at large, both in the place of Sword and Dagger, and Rapier and Dagger, for it is great advantage to leane thy head towards the right shoulder a litle; and at the beginning of your practise it is very easie to frame your selfe to my fashion, with standing both with feete and bodie, for the vse of the foore commeth not by nature, but by practise. Again, many yoong men will be growne with slouthfulnesse, and be so lazie, that they must be haled (as it were) with cartropes to any good exercise, accounting him their greatest enemy which giueth them the best counsell, but to all folly they are prone and apt



of themselves, but perswade them to any goodnesse, and you shall see them hang arse-ward like a dogge in a string.

Most youth, for example, are willing to goe to Schoole at the first, but within a weeke or lesse, away must the booke be laid, for feare lest much learning make them madde, as *Festus* said to *Paul*, for they will waxe dull and weary with a little paines taking.

And next, they must to the Fence Schoole, but there I am perswaded they neede not learne offence, and I thinke a little defence is enough for them, for many will be wearie of well doing quickly, saying as the Porters of *Bristow*, a new Maister, a new, and hang vp the old; euen so, from the Fence schoole they must goe to the Dauncing schoole, thinking that to be the onely exercise in the world, but with a little practise they waxe weary of dancing likewise: then they say, Oh that heere were one to teach Musicke! that exercise they should neuer be wearie of, but within a little while that will be too tedious a matter to comprehend: so you may perceiue yong men (by their wills) will take paines at nothing, I meane, not one in twentie, but what they are forced vnto.

Now I doe not put downe those vanities, heere before in this Chapter expressed, thereby that thou shouldest waxe the worse, by the reading of it, but I doe wish thee to marke others, and likewise examine thy selfe, that if thou see in others, or find in thy selfe such foolishnesse, refraine while thou art yong.

Although many there be that do vse foolish tricks, and perceiue them not in themselves to be vnseemly, but suppose they become them well, as he that wauereth his weapon, or runneth about, wearie him selfe:



selfe : besides, he that so runneth is in daunger of falling, for a little shrub, bush, briar, stone, or moule-hill, may soone ouerthrow him which doth not tra-uerse his ground leasurely and orderly; for he which hath true defence must bee steadie in his guard with his foote and hand in their right place, whereas hee which wauereth his weapon is at no certaine guard for his defence; therefore, to keep steadie your weapons in their right place, is the best way : for, one blow, or one thrust, orderly done, is better then an hundred without skill or out of order; for cunning in weapons may be compared to trickes at Cardes, for if one shew a trick at Cardes, it will seeme strange to him that neuer saw it before; but to him that can doe it, it is nothing troublesome : euen so, as that trick at Cardes is nothing when the secret is knowne, but very easie to be done : euen so, the best way at weapons, is as easie to bee followed (being knowne) as the worst.

Farre deceiued are those which imagine they cannot attaine vnto the perfect skill of Defence with Rapier and Dagger, without such antique fashions of learning, which many of late yeares haue deuised, some wreathing their bodies like vnto a coakes, and some, as though they were going to daunce the Antique, which maketh many that haue no experience at this weapon thinke it vnpossible euer to frame their bodies, as they see these doe, which I speake of: but now these fantatticall fellowes will perswade a man, that it is not possible to play well at Rapier and Dagger, except a man can frame his body as they do; but I say, the best and surest way is the easiest to be attained vnto; for a boy of fiftene yeares of age, may (by  
small

small practise) defend himselfe against any man, with his rapier & dagger; for a thrust with a rapier is more fearefull then with a sword, and a man may see the thrust better of a sword then with a rapier, because there is oddes in the breadth and bignesse each of the other. Againe, a man shall thrust further with a rapier then with a sword, for the hilt of a sword will shorten your reach, by reason of the closenesse of the hilt, though they be both of one length.

Yet many are of this opinion, and will say, it is better to fight with a Sword and Dagger, then with Rapier and Dagger, the reason is (say they) with my Sword I may both strike and thrust.

But I say, and by good experience I speake it, that hee which striketh in fight, giueth his enemy a great aduantage; besides, a Sword may either bow or breake, and so by that meanes hee that striketh may fall into his enemies mercy. Besides that, a boy of fifteene yeares of age may safely defend the strongest mans blow that is, according to my direction following in the first Picture; for a weake man, or a boy, may defend more with both his hands, then a strong man can charge him with one; for many can not forbear striking, being moued thereunto by anger, except they haue beene grounded in the disaduantage of it by much practise; hee that doth defend a blow double, and make a quicke answer with a thrust, by turning of his knockes inward, may hit any man that striketh, and yet defend himselfe without losse of time.

For the defence of a blow double, is sure, and yet you may answer your enemy so soone, and with as much danger to him as if you did defend it single, for

it may be all done with one motion, both the defence and offence.

Furthermore, I would counsell all Clothiers or Chapmen, which carrie many times more money then they are woorth; for their defence against false knaues, to carry a Staffe in their iournies, whether it be on horse backe or on foote; for a good weapon doth not onely serue to keepe the peace, but also a mans purse from a thiefe; and likewise to be experienced in the skill thereof, if they should be driuen to encounter vpon a sodaine at the like weapon. But a staffe may easily encounter against a Sword and dagger, although but small experience be in the Staffeman; but a little skill is a great help at a time of need, which if thou hast not obtained in thy youth, then be not ashamed to learne when thou art olde; for as in a schoole of learning; there are some in Grammer, and some in the Crosse-row; so the greatest Iudge in the land was in the Crosse-row first: euen so into a schole of Defence there commeth, as well badde players, as good, and hee which is the good player ought not, nor it is not a thing vsuall to mocke or skoffe at him which is the badde player: and what of all this? Nothing, but to shew, that it is better to learne late then neuer, I meane especially any good exercise or qualitie, which is, or may be profitable for a Commonwealth, healty to the bodie, and commendable to the world, for we are not borne altogether for our selues, but our Parents, Friends, and Country haue interest in our birth.

Now although some will talke of this and that, and say, that they haue fought with foure or sixe men at once, yet I can conceiue no reason, how anie man

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should

should defend two men, especially if they bee both willing to spoile, or kill; for when thine eie is directly vpon one of them; the other, in the meane while, may kill thee, if he be disposed; for the motion of the eie is slower then the motion of the hand; for a man cannot cast his eie about so quicke, but that he which is behinde thee, or on the one side of thee, may kill thee, if they be both willing (as I haue said before :) But indeede if one skilfull man haue two or three vpon him, and be in a narrow place, that they can not get about him, then may hee defend himselfe a long time without hurt.

A left hand skilfull hath oddes against a right handed man, one reason is, that a left handed man is continually vsed to a right hand, but a right hand doth seldome meete with a left handed man; an other reason is, a right handed man, when he doth open his right side of his head, by offering play, although hee beare his Dagger to the right eare, yet it doth not defend that side, so sure, nor so strong as it doth the left side. But indeede, so long as the right handed man lieth in his guard of defence vpon his Backe-sword, for the Backe-sword is the chiefeest poynt of defence against a left handed man; therefore when you encounter against a left handed man, you must be carefull and heedie, if you do offer play, to recouer your guard againe presently, and be in the defence of your Backe-sword guard: But of this I will speake more at large heereafter.

CHAP. VII.

*That Feare and Fury are both enemies to  
true valour.*

**H**ave taken vpon me a very hard question to decide : for I can not well set out the office of the one , but with disgrace of the other; the one is so cleane contrarie to the other : First, that Feare is an enemy vnto valour , I neede not to make any long discourse, for euery one will say , that the fearefull man will neuer attempt any thing worthy the name of Valour , but alwayes beare a load of iniuries vpon his broade shoulders , excusing all the wrongs which are done him, saying, that they were done with no intent of wrong, and so himself first crauing pardon of those which offend him , but yet bearing an iniurie in his minde, vntill he can reuenge it, by vertue of an office, or one way or another ; also, he is a raiser of mutinies, and loueth to see other together by the eares, and yet keep himselfe out of danger, but some I haue known, which haue bin timerfome and cowardly, shew great valour , but indeede it was when there was no remedie but that they must needs fight. Againe, I haue knowne many simple cowardly men, who being well experienced with skill , and being practized therein, doe waxe bolde and valorous ; for when (by often trial) they see that they can saue and defend themselues, what neede haue they to feare, for there is a certainty of defence , and hee which hath it , may bee as sure without making any doubt or question, as it is for Arithmetitian to cast vp seuerall summes iust to a penny : euen so certaine may a skilfull man be in his defence :

fence: and it is as easie to make a fearefull or cowardly man, perfect in knowledge, and so by knowledge to bring him to be valorous; yea more easie it is then to make a hastie man, of valour and stomacke, to forbear his former resolution; for as no perswasions will make a drunkard forsake his drunkenness, but onely pouertie or death: euen so there is almost no meanes to perswade the furious and hastie man from this sodaine quarrelling and stabbing, but onely many dangerous wounds, imprisonment, or death: Yet if such a one doe runne through many brawles, and so continue, vntill his owne rod hath beaten him, by crosses and troubles: if all these can not make him liue ciuill, and in sober fashion, as he ought to doe, yet olde age will bring experience, and will make him as tame as a sheepe; for when hee is olde, then hee will say, that a man should not aduenture further then skill being tempered with discretion, doth allow: for obserue I pray you, if you chauce to see two skilfull men play or fight; and if these two fall into choller and furie, so that like two wilde Bulles they goe to it pell mell, then it is chance noddie to hitte or misse; for where fury hath the vpper hand it is not worth the sight to the beholders, for they can shew no true Art, except they obserue distance, for distance being broken, they cut or hurt one another which is a great disgrace vnto true Art, and a discouragement to many which would learne skill, but that they see by such hastie fooles; that skill auaieth not, and indeede it doth little auaille such as cannot bridle their hastie affections; but yet many will say it is true, yet they cannot beware of the diuell, vntill they are plagued with his damme. For after a skilfull man hath receiued



receiued hurt he presently condemneth his owne folly, for receiuing that which he might haue auoided if his mind had been on his businesse; now as I would haue no man turn coward but to answer a good quarrell, so likewise I would most earnestly wish all men to forbear and not maintain such light and idle braules which either spring from lewd women, as that are pot frayes, for drunkennesse is the cause of the most quarrells that be, yet still I doe allow and commend any man to answer his enemy vpon a good quarrell, and to stand against him, if he doe assault thee: for that wil make others to feare to doe thee wrong or thy friend wrong, thinking that thou wilt rite it. Now he which is valorous by nature, and hath no skill, and yet hath a good strength, courage, and stomacke, many times doth aduenture rashly without feare or wit, not much vnlike a foolish gamester which vrgeth and neuer counteth vpon his fellowes game, but many times it were better hold then vie, for as som loose their mony by their rash vying at the one, so many loose their liues by a foolish bold hardinesse at the other: for many in their very first attempt, or as it were their entering into hope to get the praise of the world to bee accounted valorous loose their liues, which is for wāt of mixing discretion with stomacke.

Many examples to this effect might bee showne which hapned in the wars of *France*, *Flanders* and *Ireland*, for in all these places as good men for valor as euer the Sun did shine vpon, lost their liues vpon the very first attempt, onely by rashnesse, and so their honor is written in a Chronicle of dust, for it euen dyed with them.

I hold it a greater credit to retreat for thine owne safety being in danger, rather then still to charge one

and so be slaine or fore wounded, yet mistake me not, for I doe not here commend running away neither, but vse a meane and policy in retreating, for running away is a cowards defence. A good man may giue backe for his aduantage, and no disgrace at all, if men of iudgement doe see it, and doe iudge with discretion. For the valiantest Captaine that euer did breath, for his aduantage would retreat without any dishonor at all, therefore he which will be accounted valorous, and runne through many dangers and bryars of mischiese, quarrells and troubles of this world, he must many times be patient vpon a great wrong profered him, but afterwards with discretion examin thy force and thy skill together, how thou maist without hazard of thy life reuenge the wrong offered, and that thou maist so fight as thou maist fight againe, without loosing thy life vpon the first assault as many doe. but he is a foole which will aduenture all his goods in one ship, especially if it be in a dangerous voyage, or all his mony at one throw at dice although hee know the runne of the dice neuer so well, for he that doth so may hap to loose all. For there are many dangers at sea and many chances at dice, but a good quarrell doth halfe defend himselfe, and also a good quarrell many times maketh a coward fight: againe, it is a great discredit to bee counted a run away, the vnskillfull must doe for his owne defence at somtimes and yet stomacke enough.

Therefore whether it be in single combat or other wise, vse thy weapon with discretion, without choller or hastinesse, looking vnto thy businesse which thou hast in hand, soberly & mildly, and let wisdom guide the bridle, for so maist thou go through many a quarrell

rell and run through many skirmishes often without hurt, although not without danger.

There is no exercise learned but by often practise, for so it is made perfect: valor, and stomacke cometh by nature, but skill neuer cometh by nature, and he which is grounded in skill by arte and practise will not feare the proud brags of any man. But now if such a one fight he vseth his skill and dependeth chiefly vpon it, but the hasty and furious man thinketh that he is neuer neere enough, and so many of them neuer fight but once, for they are slaine in their owne hastinesse, the very first time of aduenturing; for haste oftentimes maketh wast.

I doe remember a prety iest of King *Henry* the eight as I haue heard it, that when he went to *Bulloigne* hee sent out his Presse-masters, commaunding them to bring all the lustiest hackers in the country, and they brought and presented him with many that in fight had receiued many wounds, the skarres whereof remained, and the King beholding them saw that some of them had beene cut in the face in one place, and some in another, and some on the head, and some had lost some of their fingers; then said the King vnto the Presse-masters, I like these men well; but yet goe fetch me them which did cut those fellowes, whereby he meant that those which had the most hurts were not the best men.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VIII.

*How the use of weapons came, also the number of weapons  
used from time to time, with other good instructions.*

**M**AN was first created naked, without any weapons naturally, sauing onely hands and feete, which are able to make but a weake resistance against any great violence, onely this the hands to thrust away that which may annoy vs, and the feete to run from that which may hurt vs. Now al other creatures except man are naturally armed with such weapons as doth oftentimes kill and destroy any other beast which doth offend them.

As for example, God in his creation furnished the Lyon, the Beare, the Dog, and the Wolfe, and other such like beasts, with long and sharpe teeth and claws, and they are with them able to teare in peeces and deuour any man or beast, which they oppose themselves against, now other beasts there are whose strength consisteth in other parts, and they doe auenge themselves in other manner; as the Vnicorne and the Bull, with their hornes, and the force of their heads, so that there is no other beast or creature is able to abide the violence and force thereof.

Also note the force of fowls of the ayre as the fawcon, and the Eagle, what a dangerous weapon is the beake of them vnto such fowles or beasts as they oppose themselves against.

Likewise for venemous beasts, as the Serpent, the Viper, the Scorpion, and such like, are so armed with poisoned and venemous stings, which not onely terrifieth but hurteth and destroyeth those men or beasts  
which

commeth neare them.

Likewise God in his creation made all creatures to seuerall purposes, but most of all for the vse of man, for some he made to feed vs, some to cloath vs, some to sport vs, and some to carry vs, and some to destroy vs.

Loe thus much by the way of argument, as a pre-  
amble to that which I intend to speak of concerning  
weapons as followeth.

In old time amongst men the strongest cary away  
the victory, I meane at that time when there was lit-  
tle or no other weapon vsed, but only tooth & naile,  
hands and feet: now in those dayes many men did  
thinke that they made a good hand when they saued  
themselues by flight, or any other meanes, from those  
which were to strong for them, and so the world con-  
tinued a long time, the strongest still carrying away  
the victory.

For what weapons had they I pray you in the time  
of *Sampson*, did not hee for want of other weapons  
with a law bone kill and destroy a thousand Philis-  
tims in a small time without any hurt to himselfe?

Now at this time if there had been any weapons of  
more danger put the case this. Although *Sampson* was  
charged vpon such a suddaine wherby he had no lei-  
sure to arme himselfe, yet you must vnderstand and  
know, that his enemies came purposely to be reuen-  
ged vpon him, because he had burned vp their corne:  
wherefore if there had been weapons they wold haue  
been so armed without all doubt or question, and so  
prouided for him, that either they would haue wound-  
ded or killed him, before he should haue made such  
hauocke or slaughter amongst them.

M

Againe,

Againe, what weapons had they when *Saingar* slue six hundred Philistines with an oxe goade, as in the third of Iudges there you may read it in the last verse.

But after this as the number of people begun to multiply, and the malice, rage, and fury of man began to increase, first they began to reuenge themselues with clubs, staues, slings, and darts. And afterward they studied and inuented other weapons and armor for wars, as at the first beginning of wars they made Iron chariots, and then they armed Elephants, and horses, afterwards they found out the forging of swords, speares, Bills, Halberts, Iauelins and Partizans, Crosse-bowes and long bowes, and such like; and euery kind of weapon for more aduantage and danger one then another, still changing onely to make triall of the best, for their aduantage, and such they keepe in vse that were of greater force not only to terrifie, but to hurt and destroy their enemies. But of late yeers they haue changed all weapons for muskets, Harquebush, and Crosse-bowes, Calieuers, Pikes, Swords, and Rapiers, and such like manly weapons of great danger, especially vnto the ignorant and vnskilfull.

Now therefore as we are provided of sundry kind of dangerous weapons, I could with euery man to spend a little time in praetising to learne skill and cunning at such weapons, as with skill are most safe to defend, and yet most dangerous and hurtfull to thy enemy, considering this that the skilfull and cunning man fighteth without feare; for not only those which vse the making of armes and weapons are well accepted of, wherein many are accounted famous, & thereby making a good liuing for their continuall maintenance,



nance, but yet more accepted are they which can vse weapons well both for defence and offence: for many thereby haue gotten such credit through out all the world, insomuch that Kings and Princes doe adorne them which are excellent therein with the names of Knights, and some with greater titles of honor: wherefore it is a great shame for any carrying the shape or personage of a man, but that he should be so cunning and so furnished with skill and with continuall practise, so to vse it, as not only to defend thy selfe, but also to speake and to discourse of weapons and armes in what company soeuer thou come into fitting such a matter.

The Romans soone after the inuention of swords generally they grew so expert and cunning, that they were able and did set forth whole armies of sword-players, such as are now called Fencers.

It is a wofull sight vnto the skilfull to see so many yong gentlemen, which being once blindfolded with ignorance and for want of skill many times lose their liues in fight, without reason or iudgement, and yet some such there are which will aduenture; onely they doe it vpon an aspiring mind, thinking thereby to get the praise of the world, which is to be accounted valorous, and tall men at armes, for to be accounted wise and valiant is euery mans desire.

Wherefore as amongst the wise and ancient writers that euer wrote, wee find the wise to prouide in summer for winter, in time of peace for wars; for ther is nothing so sure but as that after peace there will come wars, there is no man liuing that although he carry himselfe neuer so vprightly yet at one time or other he may bee so wronged that he must needs

fight : therefore he that is wise will be armed before hand, not onely with weapons, but skill ; thereby to prevent a mischiefe if occasion serue, as you shal hear more at large in the next Chapter.

## CHAP. IX.

*Sheweth what an excellent thing skill is, with persuasion to all men to forbear the maintaining of idle quarrels.*

**T**O shew you what skill is it will be a hard question to decide, and a matter too deepe for me to handle, for we see daily many principall and cunning men euen at their wits end in studying and deuising skill and cunning in all arts and sciencie, and yet to the end of their liues they find themselues ignorant in many things, and are still to learne, yea euen in that which they haue alwayes bin trained vp vnto.

Wherefore I think the ground of art and cunning is not to be found out, no although a man doe trauell more larger ground then the whole earth, or if hee should flye aboue the clouds, or diue deeper then the sea, all which is vnpossible : wherefore seeing it is so large that I cannot compas it, so high I cannot reach it, and so deepe a hidden secret, that I cannot sound the bottom of it; for I cannot trauaile so far, climbe so high, nor wade so deepe, yet so farre haue I trauelled and so high haue I climbed, and so deepe haue I waded, that I see art & skill so preuaile with those which bendeth their minds thereunto, they become more famous thē any other ordinary men are, for skill is such an excellent thing, that it abateth the choller and  
courage

courage of the hasty and furious man, so that hee be tempered with discretion; euen as yron being tempered with steele, maketh a blade; whereas if it be all steele, it will be too brittle and soonebroken; or all yron, then it will be too blunt: euen so, he which is furious and hasty will be soone killed. Againe, skill, vse and exercise therein dorth ouercome many ill humours, which without it, are neuer to be left, as you shall heare.

For, skill maketh those hardy at their weapons, which are so timeresome, as they will wincke at euerie blow; yea, and if he were as fearefull and as cowardly as a Hare by nature, yet such a one (by skill) becommeth bold, hardy, and valorous; also (by vse and practise) it maketh a man to vse both his hands alike: wherefore I would haue no man that carrieth the personage or shape of a man, but hee should learne as much skill in his weapons as possible hee can; and likewise learne as many guards at each weapon as thou mayest, that thereby thou mayest be the better able to answer any man vpon a good quarrell, if his skill and cunning were neuer so good, but he which hath skill but at one weapon, and is acquainted but with one guard, and hath but one kinde of blow, or but one kinde of thrust; I doe not see how such a man should bee able to defend himselfe from one that is skilfull and cunning in many other guards, and many blowes and thrusts; for one guard, one blow, or one thrust will quickly be worne threed-bare; it is supposed, that if a horse did know his owne strength, a man could not rule him; euen so, for want of such manly knowledge, as euery one ought to be experienced in, doe neuer come to the knowledge of their strength,

nor dare not attempt any thing worth the commendations of manhoode, onely for want of experience and practise; for little doth any man know what good fortune is allotted out for him, and sure the greatest credite and honour that euer came to any man, was through skill in weapons: such an excellent armour is Skill, that it maketh a man fight without feare: and he which hath it, will fight with such warinesse, that he will hurt, and not be hurt himselfe, except it bee by great oddes of weapons, or more then one weapon at once.

Hee which is a man of his hands will haue many tales brought him, but before thou giue any credite vnto a Tale-bearer, consider well the condition of the messenger, before thou put any confidence in his speeches, whether he be a drunkard, a coward, or a foole; for any of these three sorts of men, there is no credite nor trust to be giuen vnto their speech. Againe, a Gentleman, or a man of any good fashion, ought not to carry tales: but if such a one doe heare his friend wronged behinde his backe, he ought with discretion to answer him, in his friends behalfe, with reasonable words, and not to report vnto his friend, the worst that he heareth an idle fellow speake, except it be a matter which concerneth his life, then it is not amisse to warne thy friend, to the end he may be provided against such a mischiefe; but the carrying of euery idle tale betwixt man and man, doth much hurt, and setteth whole households together by the eares. Againe, he which is a carrier of tales, can not truely deliuer a mans speech, without adding or diminishing: and either of these two doe alter the whole property of the speech which was first deliuered, and it  
so

so falleth out many times, that the Tale-bearer bringeth himselfe into many quarrells, and to be enuied on both sides: therefore, he which can heare, and see, and say little, will finde most quietnesse, for little said is soone answered: but he that talketh much, can neuer place all his words well, nor please euery mans humour: and surely Tale-bearers are the breeders of great mischiefe.

For many times vpon others words some do beare malice one to another, without cause of desert, and yet occasion is taken, and perhappes none giuen neither; the one party doth not know of the malice the other beareth him of a long time, and this is not well, for if thou be grieued, reueale thy minde, and make a bolt or a shaft of it quickly, either to end it with weapons or with words or by the perswasions of friends, as occasion shall serue, when it cometh in question, and then afterwards be friends, but at no hand, let no enuious hatred remaine in thy heart against anie person, of what condition soeuer; but rather go vnto him which spake ill words against thee, and aske him in curteous meanes, but not in outrage and anger, vntill thou heare his tale; for the Tale bearer it may be, is in the fault, in telling a tale to make a quarrell, when there is none meant.

Meddle not with great men which are about thy calling, for though they wrong thee, and that thou hast a good quarrell, yet thou canst get little by maintaining such a quarrell; for might (oftentimes) ouercommeth right, and the weakest goeth commonly to the walles: then is it better to beare the burthen of the mighty, and indure their malice with patience, and let such quarrells slippe, rather then stirre further

in them, lest it be thy ouerthrow: and, he carrieth the most honourable minde, which in talking of his enemy, can so bridle his affections, as to vse no railing, nor vndecent speeches behind his enemies backe, for he that doth so, dishonesteth himselfe: besides, those which heare him, will iudge that hee had rather fight with his tongue then with his sword.

Againe, a man of great power and authoritie ought not to offer wrong vnto any man of meaner sort: for it hath beene often seene, that a worme being troden vpon, will turne againe; and many poore men will rather loose their liues, if so twere they durst aduventure to challenge the rich for feare of the Lawe, I do meane when they are oppressed, wronged, and disgraced by the rich and mighty men; for the Lawe is a quirke to restraine or to checke poore mens wills, for it doth hamper and temper, and bring them into subiection: and as the olde Prouerbe goeth, The rich men haue the Lawe in their owne hands.

Euen as the ignorant and vnskilfull do many times feare to displease a swaggerer or a common quarreller; euen so poore men are afraide to offend the rich.

Now concerning a rich man, I remember a prettie example or a tale, and as I heard it, you shall heare it, There was a Gentleman which built a gallant faire house, whom I will leaue namelesse, but he had many ploughs and carriages for timber, lime, and stones; some seruing his present need, for loue, some for money, and some for feare (as you shall heare) for at night, (when the carriage was ended) the Gentleman called them one after an other, and vnto the first hee said; What haue you earned? Sir (said he) I came for loue, and not for money. I thank you (said the Gentleman.)



man.) So then he asked another, saying Sirra, what came you for? Sir (said he) I am but a poore man, and I came for mony. And so the Gentleman payed him his wages: Then he called an other, and asked him wherefore he came, or what he had deserued? Sir (said he) I came not to you for loue, nor for money, but onely for feare of your displeasure. Said the Gentleman, why art thou afraid of me which neuer did thee hurt in all my life? Yea, but sir (said he) I haue seene many poore men enuyed, wronged, and imprisoned many times for ill will by the rich, when they haue but little deserued it; thereby shewing, that some rich men will beare such malice vnto a poore man, if hee shall deny him such carriage, or if hee doe not helpe him in the haruest, or if hee shall denie him the selling of a horse, ground, or cattell, that the Gentleman hath a minde vnto; for many of them thinke that a poor man shold denie them nothing, but if they doe, a grudging hatred continueth vntill they haue reuenged it; but if in a long time they cannot finde a hole in his coate, whereby to reuenge their malice: yet when a presse commeth, then they put him forth for a Souldier, although there be twentie others in the same Parish, which would willingly serue, and likewise that might be farre better spared, and a great deale more fitte, for an vnwilling seruant seldome doth his maister good seruice.

**T**H E first reason which I will set downe, whereby you may know a coward, is, by the lading of himselfe with weapons; for I haue knowne a very fearefull man to see so, and yet a coward, carry a Welch hooke vpon his backe, a close hilted Sword and Dagger, yet (mistake me not) for I doe not call euery man that is so weaponed, a coward, but stand still alittle, and you shall know who I meane.

When a man (vpon a good quarrell) doth challenge a coward into the field, it may be it commeth to this point; Where shall we meete saith the one? In such a place or such a place saith the other; but in the end, they make a secret conclusion, and choice of a place is agreed vpon; but then, if the coward goe into the field at all, hee will be sure to goe where hee will not meete with his enemy, but to one of the afore-named places, and there hee will stay a while, and if any company come by, hee will tell them, that he stayeth to fight with such a man, because they shall note him for a tall man of his hands: and then at his coming backe againe, amongst his companions, he will bragge and boast that he hath beene in the field, to meete with such a man, and he came not; when the other all the while was at the place where they concluded to haue met.

Againe, some cowards will so dare and bragge out a man in company, with such swaggering words, whereby the hearers should thinke there were not a better man to be found: and if it be in a Faire or Market,

ket, then he will draw his weapons, because he knoweth that he shall be soone parted, for the people will say, that such a one and such a one made a great fray to day, but I account this but pot-valour, or a Cowards fray to fight in the streete, for a man can giue no due commendations of manhood vnto such fighters, for there is no valour in it.

Againe, I haue knowne a Coward cunningly challenge a very sufficient man, and they haue met in the field, but at their meeting, the Coward will say thus vnto him, Now I see thou art a man, and I will take thy part against all men, but I will neuer drawe my Sword against thee, that which I did was but to trie thee.

Also a cunning Coward, when hee hath wronged or mis-used a man, the party griued doth challenge the field of him, then hee will beare it out with great bragges and high-lookes, enough to feare any man, that will be feared with words, shewing himselfe outwardly as though hee would fight indeede; for the Coward will say vnto the challenger, Thou wilt not meete mee, if I should appoint thee a place, for thou dardest not answer me: for be it knowne vnto thee, if I vn-sheathe my Sword, I will not draw him in vaine; but now if he see these bragges can not dismay nor aswage the furie of the other, but that hee will needes fight, then hee assayeth other wayes, if it be one of his acquaintance, hee will say, The world shall not speake of it, that wee two should fall out: or, if it be to an inferiour, then he will stand vpon his gentility, saying that he will not doe him that credite, for thou art a base fellow, a fellow of no fashion, to compare with me. I haue knowne in a strange place, that a scur-

my base fellow will stand so much vpon his gentilitie, and thinke to make the world beleue he is a great man in his owne Countrey. Also, in a Tauerne or such like place, if there be company ready to holde him, then he will draw his Dagger vpon very smal occasion, shewing himselfe resolute, as though hee would fight with the diuell; and then the company (with a little perswasion) brings them friends, which I discommend not, but I discommend the falling out about a pipe of Tobacco, or a cuppe of Wine or Beere. But of this I haue spoken something before, and shall haue occasion to speake more at large of it heereafter; But first, to end this I haue in hand, many a Coward may say, when he hath liued so long in the world vntill the world is weary of his company, I may be the best man in the world, for I was neuer yet tried, nor neuer drew my Sword in earnest in all my life hitherto: againe, it is good sleeping in a whole skinne.

And a wise or a valorous man may euen say so as well as a Coward: for I say a man may very well answer a good quarrell, if occasion be offered, yet sleep in a whole skinne; why shall wee feare to goe to our beddes, because some die in their beddes; some die at Sea, and therefore shall we feare to crosse the Sea; some fall by chance, shal we neuer therefore rise for feare of falling? And what is all this? Nothing, but to shew, that there is lesse danger in fighting a good quarrell with skill and discretion, vpon colde blood: but of this I haue spoken sufficiently already, if words would serue. But if I should write a whole Volume of one matter, yet it would serue to small purpose to some; and so where we left there we will beginne,  
for

for what I haue said before, it is but as it were a deaw, but this last shower shall wet them to the skinne; a Coward will haue a Sword or a Rapier, for length (in a maner) like a halfe Pike: but since the vse of short Swords came, you cannot kuow them by that marke, as you might before, for many of them are got into the fashion, and it is the fittest weapon that euer came for their purpose; for short swords are worne both of one and other, more for the fashion then for any other purpose: but because men of good woorth doe weare them, therefore I will not call it the fooles fashion, but let euerie man alone with his humour. Againe, a Coward will haue as good and as gallant a weapon as may bee gotten for money; but I doe not commend the man by the largeness nor goodnesse of his weapons, neyther hee that hath many hurts and scarres about his bodie. There is no due commendations to bee giuen of a Iudge, by his skarlet Gowne; neyther can a man commend the skilfulnes of the Marriner by his wearing of a great whistle: golde is not certainly knowne to be golde, before it is tried, euery thing is not as it seemeth to bee for many a man carrieth the shape and personage of a man: but when they come to the touch like golde to be tried, prooue but shadowes, as that which is like golde many times doth prooue worse then Copper: euen so, there is no certaine true report canbe giuen of a man touching manhooode vpon the first sight, without some triall. You shall seldome see a Coward vse his weapon, except it be vpon a drunken humour, or else, when he is driuen to it by extremity, and that he seeth no remedy, but that hee must needs fight, but he wil many times be drawing in some Ale-house

or Tauerne, and there hee will be fencing with him, and shewing his trickes, thinking to make the company beleue, that hee is an excellent fellow of his hands: and there many will be hewing of bed-postes, or table-boards, or many such like trickes he will vse: then some Cowards will (by casting abroad of libels) and by night-walking, doe many mischieuous trickes, onely to reuenge a mallice which they beare in mind, because they can not reuenge it manfully, and yet a Coward will grieue and fret if iustly hee heare any other to be commended of any man for his manhoode and valour, for hee would haue no man better then himselfe. And if such a one beare office in Cittie or Towne, hee will at no hand abide to heare, that a master of Defence should inhabite in the place where he gouerneth.

Also if any other commend a man that is a man indeed, a coward will discommend him saying, he is no body; or he is not the man you take him for; with such like disabling speeches, for if a coward cannot disgrace a man with deeds to his face, then he will depriue him with words behind his backe.

Also a coward delighteth to breed quarrells betwixt man and man, and to set such as are named to bee men of their hands, together by the eares by false reports, and by carrying of tales, and by making of molehills mountaines, of halfe a word a long tale, to the hurt of others, and no good to themselues: and what is the chiefe cause of all cowardly mindes but onely ignorance, and want of skill: but to conclude, neuer trust a coward in his fury, nor suffer him not to come n eerer then the point of thy rapier, and there let him tell his tale, but let him haue no aduantage vpon



vpon thee by no kind of illusions, especially if he be thy professed enemy.

That he is a coward which praetiseth the throwing of a dagger or the darting of a rapier, I will not say, but he which putteth it in practise vpon a man, is a coward, for if he kill a man with such a trick, in my mind it is pittie but he should die for it: and so I will end with that example of a cowardly murtherer of one *Cosbe*, whose murthering hands by a coufening deuice bereaued the Lord of *Burke* of his life, and as I heard it, thus it was: a quarrell grew between them, and the field was appointed, where they both met, and being ready to charge each other, *Cosbe* said my Lord you haue spurs which may annoy you: therefore if you please put them off, and euen as he was unbuckling of his spurs, this cowardly and murthering minded *Cosbe* ran him through with a mortall wound, whereof he died presently.

Now to my owne knowledge, my Lord *Burke* was very skilfull in his weapons, and sufficient to haue answered any man beeing equally weaponed, or vpon equall termes, therefore hard was his hap to meet with such a cowardly murtherer, for his death is lamented of many, and *Cosby* was hanged for it.

Yet touching this matter, here followeth another example, as I heard it I will declare it: thus, there was a murtherer who escaping the pittifully hands of the mercifull Iudge, after he had killed two men, being taken and apprehended for the third murther, and being arraigned before the same Iudge which had before shewed pittie, began now to condemne this murtherer, and giue the sentence of death, and so began to declare to this murtherer that had small grace, which

which could not beware being twice warned, but must now kill the third man : therefore thou (saith the Iudge) well deseruest death, & death thou shalt haue: when the murtherer saw that he must die, he said thus vnto the Iudge: My Lord you doe me wrong to condemne me for the killing of three men, for it was you that killed two of them : yea said the Iudge, how can that be? marry thus: if you had hanged me for the first I had not killed the other two : therefore it is pittie in my mind, that a man-slayer should liue to kill two men, but to be hanged for the first if it be not in his owne defence, or vpon a very good quarrell, and so I will strike faile for a while.

## CHAP. XI.

*Questions and Answers.**Scholler.*

**H**auē harkened all this while vnto your discourse, the which I like very well of, but now I am desirous if it please you to be instructed with some of your skill.

*Master.* At what weapon are you desirous to learn.

*Scholler.* Such as you thinke fit for my defence.

*Master.* Then I hold it necessary for thee to learne the perfect vse of sixe kinds of weapons, not that thou shouldest still bee armed with so many weapons, but with the skill of them, for that will not burthen thee nothing at all : for thou maist in trauell by chance meet at sundry times, with sundry men, which are armed with sundry kind of weapons, now if thou bee prouided before hand with skill at such a weapon, as by chance thou maist meet withall, knowing the dan-

ger thou wilt the better prevent the mischiefe.

*Scholler.* What be the fixe weapons which you would haue me to learne.

*Master.* The first and two principall weapons are the rapier and dagger, and the staffe, the other fowre are the back sword, the single Rapier, the long sword and dagger, and the short sword and dagger, but with the two former weapons thou maist encounter by skill with any man in the world, the rapier and dagger against any weapon of the same length, at single hand and with a staffe against any two handed weapon, as against the welch hooke, two hand sword, the Halberd, Partisan, and gloue, or any other weapon of the like aduantage : but prouided alwayes thou must be sure armed with skill at those two especially : and with all the rest if thou canst, for then maist thou bee the bolder to encounter with any man at any of the other, if thy enemy charge thee vpon the suddaine with a contrary weapon, thou wilt presently know what thy enemy can doe with his weapon, which if thou hast no skill in, it will seeme the more fearefull vnto thee.

For if *Golias* had been experienced in the cunning of a sling, hee would not haue condemned *David* so rashly, nor made so light account of him as he did : but if thou haue skill with such a weapon, as thou art to encounter against, it will be nothing troublesome vnto thee, for there is no way to hit, but there is a way to defend, as thou shalt here more at large, but first tell me what thou art, and thy bringing vp.

*Scholler.* I was a yeomans sonne, and alwayes brought vp idle vnder my father, but now my father is dead, and that little which he left mee for the most part I  
O haue

haue consumed and spent, wherefore I pray you direct me my course, by some of your good counsell, for I haue little to trust to, but only my hands, therefore I am willing to learne any thing which may gain me a good report, and something beneficiall for my maintenance.

*Master.* Indeed meanes to liue and a good name withall, is more then gold, and because thou shewest thy selfe willing to be instructed, thou shalt heare briefly what I would doe if my selfe were in thy case, for if I should enter into large discourses I might thereby well make thee weary with the hearing of it, but perhaps neuer the wiser, and so thereby thou mightest well giue me occasion to account the time very ill spent in writing of it. Neuerthelesse I will reckon little of my labour, for I am in hope to doe thee good, for thou must or shouldest know not only how to vse and gouerne thy weapon, but also thy selfe, in all companies, and in all places, where thou shalt happen to come; for kinde and curteous behauiour winneth fauour and loue wherefoeuer thou goest, but much the better if it be tempered with manhood and skill of weapons. Now some will say that skill in weapons is good most chiefly for gentlemen, but I say it should be in all men, for I haue known and seen many poore mens sonnes come to great honor and credit, and chiefly it was because they had skill in weapons, wherefore in my mind it is the most excellent quality of all both for high and low, rich and poore. But when thou art experienced at thy weapon, I would wish thee to make choice of one of those three exercises for thy continuall expences and maintenance so long as thou liuest, and not liue like a drone vpon  
other

other mens labours , for least in time if thou wert neuer so good a man, yet euery one would waxe weary of thy company.

*Scholler.* I pray you , what be the three Exercises which you would counsell me to take my choice of?

*Master.* Marry, thy selfe being of reasonable good yeares , and hauing neither lands , nor but a little liuing left thee , choose whether thou wilt goe learne some trade or occupation , or else goe into the wars, or be a seruing man; for when thou hast skill in thy weapon , thou must haue some meanes to maintaine thine expences ; for idle hands will make a hungrie bellie , and a hungrie bellie must needes haue meate, and meate will not be bought in the market for honestie without money.

*Scholler.* Which of these Exercises would you aduise me to follow?

*Master.* I commend them all, but yet an occupation is a more certaine stay vnto a man , both in his youth and in his age , then any of the other two are ; and as thou art in yeares, so oughtest thou to bee the more witty, if it be not so, it should be so, and a man of reason will the sooner be his crafti-master . A man is neuer too olde to learne , especially any thing that may be to the good and profit of the commonwealth; and it is better to learne late then neuer : and he that hath a trade , let him looke vnto it , and hee which will not labour, let him not eate, saith *Saint Paul.*

*Schol.* What trade would you haue me to learne?

*Master.* Such a trade or occupation, as thy minde bendeth most vnto , and then to apply thy selfe to it, and follow it, and strue by honest meanes and painefull labour to be rich, for thou mayest be poore when

thou wilt, but there is no trade good to him which will not to follow it, for he that hath neuer so many trades, and yet giueth his mind to drunkenness, and loueth to leade an idle and loytering life: such a one will neuer thrive, but sit in an Ale-house, and complaine, that the world is hard, and that worke is very scant; indeede, so it is with such a one, for a man can feldome finde them in their owne houses, whereby to put worke into their hands, but those that doe looke for worke, and attend it, need neuer to want worke, but will alwayes be in other mens worke, or else they will be able (by their good husbandry) to set themselves aworke, and it is a very bad commoditie, that will not yeelde mony at one time or other.

Do you vnderstand me? if not, I will make it more plaine, hearken to that which followeth, then aboue all, giue not thy minde to ranging or running from Towne to Towne, or from Countrey to Countrey, for a rolling stone will neuer gather mosse, the Grasshopper will rather die then goe out of the grasse; and thou (with good behauiour) mayest better liue with a groat in thine owne Countrey, then with a pound in a strange place, for in a strange place, although thou be of good behauiour, yet many will feare thee, and be loath to giue thee credite, and will thinke, if thou wert of good behauiour, thou shouldest haue had no neede to come out of thine owne Countrey: Againe, thy flying away will be a great discredite vnto thee, if thou thinke to come home againe; for euery man almost will be loath to put credite, or anie thing of valew into the hands of a ranger, because that they are not resolu'd that thy minde is settled to stay in thine owne Country, when thou dost turne  
from



from thy race againe. Many men there are that consume their time in ranging abroad, and at the last, seeing the vanity of the world, they recall themselves, and repent of the time which they haue consumed in trauell: but then they haue experience although no money; now Experience is no coiner, nor a tradesman woorth a pinne without his tooles; for what auayleth it to be a cunning Gold-smith, and haue neyther gold nor siluer: few there are that will trust a traueller any further then they can see him, especially, if hee haue bene one that hath serued as a Souldier in a forreine Countrey: therefore, although home be homely, indeuour thy selfe to liue by honest and good meanes, and be contented with thine homely home; but beware, spend not Michaelmasse rent in Midsummer quarter abroad, as many bad husbands vse to doe.

Now if a trade be too tedious for thee to learne, or too painefull for thee to follow, then goe thou vnto the warres, and serue eyther by Sea or Land, as thy affections shall best leade thee vnto: but in seeking by the warres to get wealth, if thou loofest thy life while thou art yoong, thou needest not to care for olde age; yet by the warres (if fortune serue) but to speake more Christian-like (if God will) thou maiest get that in one houre, which (with good discretion and gouernement) thou mayest be the better for, so long as thou liuest: the goods which do come by the warres, are neyther light come by, nor godlily gotten (in my minde;) yet many thinke that wealth gotten by the warres, is easily gotten; for so it appeareth by the prodigall and vaine spending of it: wherefore I would haue thee furnish thy selfe with Discretion

The warres are  
not like throw-  
ing of snowe  
balles: farre  
deceiued are  
they that so  
thinke.

and Knowledge before-hand, that thereby thou maist the better vse wealth when thou hast it; but then thou must not abuse it, as many other Souldiers haue done heretofore: for I haue knowne many get both goods and money by the warres, but haue made no other reckoning, but as one would say, lightly come lightly goe; and so suffering it to melt away like butter in the Sunne: therefore if thou happen, by the warres, vpon that may doe thee good, keepe it warily, and spend it wisely: for it is said, a dog shall haue a day, and a man shall haue his time; but if he let Time slip, she is bauld behinde, and therefore no holde to be taken of her after her backe is once turned; for I haue knowne many by the wars, get at one voyage, enough to liue by all their liues long, if with discretion it had bin gouerned; but they haue consumed it in so short a time, that a man would thinke it impossible; and then to the warres againe they go in hope of the like fortune, but they haue not in seauen yeares, nay all their life time got so much, as they spent in one day, when they had crownes.

Goods gotten  
by the warres  
are like a liue  
Bird in the  
hand, which,  
the hand no  
sooner opened  
but she strait  
flieth away.

Then consider with thy selfe, that if thou doe light vpon wealth, that thou comest not light by it, if thou get it by the warres, though indeede it is gotten in an houre, yet it is gotten with great hazard of thy life, and no doubt it is displeasing to God, for goods gotten by the warres serue but for spending mony for the time present; those which doe saue them, and hoord them vp, they are consumed before two generations doe passe, yea though it were abundance, it cometh to nothing, as in my farewell to *Plimmouth* more at large appeareth.

Now (in my minde) the third and the worst choise

I haue left till the last, and that is a seruing-mans life, yet it is as it happeneth, for some happen into good seruice, and some againe spend seauen yeeres, yea all their life time, and so they grow the older, little the wiser, nor neuer a whit the richer; and some of them neuer care so they haue from hand to mouth, nor neuer thinke vpon a rainy day vntill it come, and gentlemen are wise for they will not keepe a dog and barke themselues, neither will they keepe a cat except shee will catch mice; therefore if thou wilt be a seruing-man thou must take great paines, otherwise thou wilt haue smal gaines at the end of thy seruice; yea though thou be neuer so painfull and dutifull, yet when thou lookest to receiue thyreward, there may be such great fault found in thy seruice, that all the golden words and faire promises which thou hast been deluded and haled forward withall, they may all come to nothing except thy bare wages, there may be a bill of caueling put in for the rest, saying if thou hadst been an honest man, thou shouldest haue had this or that, if thou liue neuer so vprightly, yet there may be faults found, for it is a very easie matter to find a staffe to beat a dogge withall, but because I cannot well display the life of a seruingman, but either I shall displease the Master or the man, or both; therefore I will here conclude, and leaue the rest to thy daily experience, and so for a while harken vnto the skill of weapons.

*Sheweth of seauen principall rules whereon true defence is grounded.*

- |   |                             |   |                   |
|---|-----------------------------|---|-------------------|
| { | 1 A good gard.              | { | 5 To keepe space. |
| 2 | True obseruing of distance. | 6 | Patience.         |
| 3 | To know the place.          | 7 | Often practise.   |
| 4 | To take time.               |   |                   |

**T**He first is to learne a good and a sure gard for the defence of thy body, as when you come to the vse of weapons, as heere presently after shall follow, and when thou hast thy gard it is not enough to know it, but to keep it so long as thou art within reach or danger of thy enemy.

To obserue distance, by which is meant that thou shouldest stand so far off from thine enemy, as thou canst, but reach him when thou dost step forth with thy blow or thrust, and thy foremost foote and hand must goe together, the which distance may be twelue foot with a rapier, or with a sword foure foote long, and yet thy best foot which should be the hindermost foot of a right handed man, should bee moored fast and keepe his standing without moouing an inch, for then he will be the readier to draw backe thy fore foot and body into the right place of distance againe for that thou must doe vpon euery charge, whether thou hit thy enemy or not; whereas if in stepping forth with thy fore-foot, when thou dost charge thy enemy either with blow or thrust, thou suffer thy hinder foot to dregge in after the other, then thou breakest thy distance, and thereby endangerest thy body. There is no way better to get the true obseruation of distance,

distance, but by often practise either with thy friend, or else priuately in a chamber against a wall, standing twelue foot off with thy hindermost foote, and thy weapon fowre foot long or there about, for a good gard and distance are the maine and principal points of all.

To know the place, this may be taken three wayes, as this, the place of thy weapons, the place of defence and the place of offence: the place for the holding of thy weapons, thou shalt know when thou comcest to it as I said before, but it is chiefly meant heere the place of offence; thou must marke which is the neereft part of thine enemy towards thee, and which lyeth most vnregarded, whether it be his dagger hand, his knee, or his leg, or where thou maist best hurt him at a large distance without danger to thy selfe, or without killing of thine enemy.

To take time, that is to say when opportunity is profered thee, either by his lying vnregarded or vpon thy enemies profer, then make a quicke answer, I meane it must be done vpon the very motion of his profer, thou must defend and seeke to offend all at once, for thou must not suffer thy enemy to recouer his gard, for if thou doe thou loosest thy aduantage. But thou must answer him more quicker then I can speake it, for if thou loose thy answer, and charge thy enemy when he is garded, thou giuest thy enemy that aduantage which thou mightest haue had thy selfe, for he which maketh the first assault doth endanger himselfe most, if he be not very expert and cunning in his businesse, otherwise a man of reasonable skill may hurt him by making a quicke answer.

To keepe space this may be conceiued two wayes;

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the one in the space between thy enemy & thy selfe, this I call distance, and I haue already spoken of it; but the space which in this place I will speake of, is to aduise thee to keepe a certaine space betwixt euery assault, I meane if thou charge thy enemy either with blow or thrust, recouer thy weapons into their place, and draw thy selfe into thy gard againe, and so preparing thy selfe for to defend, and likewise to make a fresh assault with discretion, but not charging thy enemy rashly or furiously, for hastinesse is foolishnes: for if fury haue the vpper hand, and so you both strike and thrust, without reason and iudgement, I say in such a case the skilfullest man that is, may be so well hit as he hit another.

The next is patience, and that is one of the greatest vertues that can be in a man: the Wise man saith, he is a foole which cannot gouerne himselfe, and he very vnfit to rule which cannot rule himselfe; therefore, though thou be hastie or cholericke by nature, and by crossing thou art moued vnto anger; yet I say, let the bridle of Reason and Iudgement so gouerne and ouer-rule thy hastie affections, that in no case Anger get the vpper hand; But of this there is more at large spoken in the eight chapter. Now the last thing that I will note heere, is often practise, for without practise the Prouerbe sayes, a man may forget his *Pater noster*: for practise (with moderation) is, not onelie the healthiest thing in the world for the bodie: but it is likewise as defensiu for the same. For skill to euerie reasonable man is a friend, so that with moderation it be vied, and so long as it remains in those of good temper; for vnto such, skill bringeth no more presumption nor furie then as if they had it not: for  
in



in the field, those which I meane will vse it as if they were in a Schoole, by which meanes such haue great aduantage of the ignorant and vnskilfull; for those which are vnskilfull, are neither certaine of their defence nor offence; but what they doe is vpon a kinde of foolish bolde hardinesse, or as I may say by hazzard or chance noddie: and therefore (gentle Reader) resolute vpon skill and knowledge which follows heere immediately.

*The true guard for the defence, either of blowe,  
or thrust, with Rapier and Dagger,  
or Sword and Dagger.*

**K**eepe thy rapier hand so low as the pocket of thy hose at the armes end, without bowing the elbow ioynt, and keepe the hilt of thy dagger right with thy left cheeke, and the poynt something stooping toward the right shoulder, and beare him out stiffe at the armes end, without bowing thine elbow ioynt likewise, and the poynt of thy Rapier two inches within the point of thy dagger, neyther higher, nor lower; but if the point of thy rapier betwo or three inches short of touching thy dagger, it is no matter, but if they ioyne it is good; likewise, keepe both your points so high as you may see your enemy cleerely with both your eies, betwixt your rapier and dagger, and bowing your head something toward the right shoulder, and your body bowing forwards, and both thy shoulders, the one so neere thine enemy as the other, and the thombe of thy rapier hand, not vpon thy rapier, according vnto the vsuall fashion of the vulgar sort, but vpon the naile of thy fore-finger, which will locke thine hand the stronger about the

handle of thy rapier, and the heele of thy right foote should ioyne close to the middle ioynt of the great toe of thy left foote, according to this Pi&ure, yet regard chiefly the words rather then the Pi&ure.



Carrie the edge of thy rapier vpward, and downward, for then thou shalt defend a blow vpon the edge of thy rapier, by bearing thy rapier after the rule of the Backe-sword, for this is the strongest and the surest carriage of him.

But now it is but a vaine thing to goe about to practise after my direction, except thou vnderstand my meaning, and follow my counsell, as by words so plaine as I can, I haue set downe, both before and after: for if thou obserue one thing, and not an other, it will profite thee but little, as thus: if thou place thy weapons

weapons in order; and then, if thy hand, foote, or body be out of order, then it will be to small purpose to proceed in thy practise: againe, if thou frame thy bodie right, and thy weapons, and thy hand, and thy foote; yet if thou do not obserue a true distance withall, then thy practise will be little auailable to thee: wherefore at the first beginning of thy practise, take a good aduisement, and be perfect by often reading of this Booke, so to beginne well; for if thou hast bene vsed to set thy feete abroad in thy former practise, as most men doe, then it will be hard for thee to leaue thy old wont.

Now, if thou wilt breake thy selfe of that fashion and practise after my rules, then will I shew thee by and by; for when thou hast my fashion, thou mayest goe to thine owne againe when thou wilt, if in triall thou finde it better.

The best way to bring thy feete to a sure standing, both for defence and offence, is when thou dost practise with thy friend or companion; at the first get thy backe to the wall, and let him that playeth with thee stand about twelue foote distance, and set thy left heele close to the wall, and thy right foote heele to the great ioynt of the left foote great toe, and when thou intendest to offend thy enemy, either with blow or thrust, then steppe forth with thy right foote, and hand together, but keepe thy left foote fast moored like an anchor, to plucke home thy body and thy right foote into his place and distance againe; vse this fashion but three or foure times, and it will bring thee to a true standing with thy foote, and it will be as easie to thee as any other way; whereas if thou practise in a large roome without any stoppe to set thy foot a-

gainst, then will thy left foote be alwayes creeping away, so that although thou wouldst refraine the setting abroad of thy feet, yet thou canst not, especially if thou hast been vsed to set them abroad heretofore.

Now your bodie and weapons being thus placed as aforesaid, if your enemy strike a blow at you, either with sword or rapier, beare your rapier against the blow, so well as your dagger according vnto the rule of the Backe-sword, for in taking the blow double you shall the more surely defend your head, if the blowe doe chaunce to light neare the point of your dagger, for if you trust to your dagger onelie, the blow may hap to glance ouer the point of your dagger, and endanger your head, and hauing defended the blow double (as aforesaid) presently turne downe the point of your rapier towards your enemies thigh, or anie part of your enemies bodie; as you list your selfe; and with your thrust steppe forth also with your foote and hand together, and so making a quicke answer, you may endanger your enemy in what place you will your selfe, before hee recouer his guard and distance againe, and alwaies set your rapier foot right before the other, and so neare the one to the other as you can; and if thou be right handed then thy right foote must bee formost, if left handed, then thy left foote, and standing thus in thy guard, looke for thy aduantage, I meane where thine enemy lieth most vngarded; but first thou must be perfect in the knowledge of the true and perfect guard thy selfe, so shalt thou know the better where thine enemy lieth open, then thou must steppe forth with thy fore foot, and hand together, to offend thine enemy in such a place as thou findest vngarded; but so soone as thou hast  
presen-

presented thy thrust, whether thou hit or misse, fall backe againe to recouer thy guard and distance so soone as thou canst, but stand alwayes fast on thine hindermost foote, I meane whether thou strike or thrust, and then shalt thou recouer thy guard; and hauing recouered thy weapons in their right place, then thou must also trauerse thy ground so leisurably, that thou mayest be sure to haue one foote firme on good ground before thou pluckest vp the other; for else, going fast about, thou mayest quickly be downe if the ground be not euen. Also haue a speciall care that thou be not too busie in making of play, though choller or sto nacke prouoke thee thereunto. Furthermore, in standing in thy guard, thou must keepe thy thighes close together, and the knee of thy fore legge bowing back-ward rather then forward, but thy bodie bowing forward; for the more thou hollowest thy bodie, the better, and with lesse danger shalt thou breake thine enemies thrust, before it cometh neare to endanger thy bodie; and when thou breakest a thrust, thou must but let fall the point of thy dagger, but not thy dagger arme, for some will throw their dagger arme backe behinde them when they breake a thrust; he that so doth cannot defend a second thrust if his enemy should charge him againe sodainely.

*The reasons of this guard.*

**F**irst, the points of your weapons being closed, your enemy cannot offend you with a wrist blow, which otherwise may be stricke to your face betwixt your points: likewise, there is a falling thrust that may hit any man which lies open with his points by following it into his face or breast, and thrusting

it home withall: also, if you carrie your rapier point vnder your dagger, your own rapier may hinder you, for by turning downe of your dagger point, to defend the bodie from your enemies point, according vnto the first of the foure defensible waies, as hereafter followeth: then your owne dagger may hit your owne rapier, and so your rapier will be as it were a stumbling block, so that you cannot discharge your enemies thrust cleane from your bodie; and also by striking your dagger vpon your rapier wilbe a hindrance vnto you, that you cannot make a quicke answer, by chopping out your point presently vpon your defence: for if you haue anie hindrance at all, then your chiefe time of offence is spent, for before you can recouer your rapier, your enemy will haue recouered his guard, and he being in his guard your proffer of offence is in vaine: for if you will hit your enemy, your offence and defence must be done all with one motion, whereas if you continue a space betwixt your defence and your offence, then is your best time of offence spent, for when your enemy chargeth you, either with blow or thrust, at that verie instant time, his face, his rapier, arme, shoulder, knee, and legge are all discovered, and lie open, except the oppressour be verie cunning in recouering his guard hastily againe, or he may defend himselfe with his dagger, if he beare him stiffely out at the armes end, for in your offence the dagger hand should be borne out so farre as the rapier hand goeth, which must be done by practise and great carefulnesse; for many when they doe make their assault, they will put out their rapier, and plucke in their dagger, thereby endangering themselves greatly: for except that the dagger arme bee kept



kept straight, and borne out stiffe, it is hard to defend either blow or thrust.

*A thrust may be defended foure waies.*

**T**He first is with the dagger, onelie by turning of the point downe, and turning thy hand-wrist about withall, without bowing the elbow ioynt of thy dagger arme, but onelie turning thy dagger round, making as it were a round circle, and so presently bring vp the point of thy dagger in his place againe.

Now the second defence is with the dagger likewise, but then you must beare the hilt of your dagger so lowe as your girdle-steed, and the point more vpright then is described in the first picture, and in your defence of a thrust, you must beare your dagger hand stiffe ouer your bodie, without letting fall the point but still keeping him vpright.

The third waie to breake a thrust, is, with the single rapier; this defence will defend all thy bodie from a thrust against a rapier and a dagger; and likewise it is a sure defence for thine hand, if thou haue not a close hilted dagger, when thy enemy doth proffer a thrust, plucke in thy dagger hand, and put out thy rapier arme, and beare him ouer thy bodie, the point bowing toward thy left side, breaking the thrust with the edge of thy rapier, keeping thy point vpright: but when I come to the single rapier, then you shall see it more at large.

The fourth way is to defend a thrust with both your weapons together, and that you may doe three manner of waies, either with the points of both your weapons

pons vpwards, or both downward, vpward you may frame your selfe into two gards, the first is according as I haue described afore, the points being close according to the picture, so carrie them both away together against your enemies thrust breaking towards your left side; the other high guard is to put your rapier on the out-side of your dagger, and with your dagger make a crosse, as it were, by ioyning him in the midst of your rapier, so high as your breast, and your dagger hilt in his vsuall place, and to defend your thrust, turne downe the point of your rapier sodainely, and force him downe with your dagger, by letting them fall both together: this way you may defend a thrust before it come within three foot of your bodie; and this way defendeth the thrust of a staffe, hauing but onelie a rapier and dagger, as you shall heare more when I come to the staffe: for it is good to be prouided with the best way, if a sodaine occasion be offered: and for the blow of a staffe, you may verie easily defend with a Rapier and Dagger, by bearing him double; and so hauing defended the blow, goe in hastily vpon him, for there is no standing out long against a staffe, and so likewise vpon defence of a thrust you must be verie nimble in your going in within the point of his staffe, I mean so soone as your enemies thrust is passed vnder your Rapier arme, for that way the thrust of the staffe should goe.

*Three manner of waies for the holding of a Rapier.*

**T**Here are three waies for the holding of a Rapier, the one with the thumb forward or vpon the Rapier blade, and that I call the naturall fashion, there

is

is another way, and that is with the whole hand within the pummell of thy Rapier, and the thumbe locking in of the fore-finger, or else they must both ioyn at the least: this is a good holding at single Rapier.

Then the third is but to haue onelie the fore-finger and thy thumbe within the pummell of thy Rapier, and thy other three fingers about thy pummell, and beare the button of thy pummell against the in-side of thy little finger; this is called the Stokara fashion, and these two last are the surest and strongest waies: after a litle practise thou maiest vse them all three in thy practise, and then repose thy selfe vpon that which thou findest best, but at some times, and for some purpose all these kindes of holding thy Rapier may stead thee, for a man may performe some manner of slips and thrusts, with one of these three sortes of holding thy weapon; and thou canst not doe the same with neither of the other: as thus, thou maiest put in a thrust with more celeritie, holding him by the pummell, and reach further then thou canst doe, if thou holde him on either of the two other fashions.

Againe, thou maiest turne in a slippe, or an ouer-hand thrust, if thou put thy thumbe vpon thy Rapier according as I haue set it downe, calling it the naturall fashion, and is the first of the three waies for holding of thy Rapier; and this fashion will bee a great strength to thee, to giue a wrist blowe, the which blow a man may strike with his Rapier, because it is of small force, and consumes little time, and neither of the other two fashions of holding wil not perform neither of those three things; for if thou holde thy rapier either of the two second waies, thou canst not turne in a slippe, nor an ouer-hand thrust, nor giue a

wrist blow so speedily, nor so strong : wherefore it is good to make a change of the holding of thy weapon for thine owne benefite, as thou shalt see occasion : and likewise to make a change of thy guard, according as thou seest thy best aduantage; I meane if thou be hardly matched, then betake thee vnto thy surest guard, but if thou be matched with an vnskilful man, then with skill thou maiest defend thy selfe, although thou lie at randome.

The reason that your points should be so high, as you may see your enemy plainely and cleerely vnder them, is for a sure defence of a blowe, if your enemy should charge you therewith to either side the head, then beare them both double together, and hauing defended the blowe, presently turne downe the point of your Rapier toward your enemies thigh, and with turning your knuckles inward, steppe forth with foote and hand together, whether you hitte or misse, retire nimble into your guard and distance againe.

And although I doe aduise you to keepe the point of your Rapier so high, yet withall I doe warne you, that you maie haue a speciall care to fall your point, and withall thrust him out, if your enemy doe ouerreach or presse in vpon you, whether it bee vpon choller, or vpon stomake, or vpon a kinde of foolish bold hardinesse, or if hee make a passage vpon you, or if hee doe breake distance by anie of those waies, although hee doe it neuer so aſiuelie, yet may you defend your selfe with your Dagger and either offend your enemy by a suddaine falling the point, and with the same motion chop in with a thrust to that part which lieth most discouered as you may quickly

ly perceiue when you see his lying.

The cunningest man that is, and if hee meete with one skilfull, with whom hee is to encounter withall, cannot before hand say in such a place I will sure hit thee; no more, then a gamester when he goeth to play can say before he beginne, that hee will sure win, for if he doe, he may be prooued a lier if his cunning were neuer so good.

So that before hand you cannot determin where to hit your enemy, but when you see your enemies gard, then it is easie to iudge where it is open, if thou knowest a close gard thy selfe, for hee which cannot write himselfe, can giue but small iudgement whether another write well or ill, and if thine enemy doe inroach within thy distance, then bee doing with him betimes in the verie instant of his motion whether it be motion of his body, or the motion of his weapon, or in the motion of both together: put out thy point, but not to farre, but as thou maiest haue thy rapier vnder command for thy owne defence, and also to prouide him ready againe to make a full thrust home vpon a greater aduantage, for if thou answer a full thrust home, in the instant of thy enemies assault, thou maiest endanger thy selfe if thy enemy doe falsifie his thrust, and therefore make your thrust short at the first, or if your enemy doe beare his points anie thing abroad, then you may fall in betwixt them, either to his face or breast, or if his fore foote stand two foote distant or lesse from the other if hee stand not close, then you may hurt him in the knee or legge, either with thrust or blow as hee standeth in his guard without anie danger to your selfe, and that is no killing place.

Q 3

Like-



Likewise it is said before looke vnder both your weapons, if with on eye you looke ouer either of weapons, you may bee hit one the same side, either face, head, or shoulder, either with thrust or blow before you can put vp either of your weapons in his place to defend it, and this know and remember it well, it is the nature of an Englishman to strike with what weapon soeuer hee fighteth with all, and not one in twenty but in furie and anger will strike vnto no other place but onely to the head, therefore alwaies if you fight with rapier and dagger, yet expect a blow so well as a thrust, and alwaies defend the blow double as aforesaid, but if your rapier point be downe vnder your dagger, you cannot put him vp time enough to defend a blow, but must take it single on the dagger, or on the pate, for if your skill were neuer so good trusting to the dagger onelie you may bee deceiued by reason of the sharpnesse of your dagger, if the blow light neere the point it may glance ouer, and so hit you on the head, and also by reason of the shortnesse of your dagger which are now most commonly worne of all men, for I haue knowne men of good skill deceiued by trusting to the point, or dagger onely for the defence of a blow, the dagger is not sure to defend it.

For looke how  
much you  
step wide you  
loose so much  
ground for-  
wards.

But when you make anie plaie to your enemy whether it be offer, or an answer, stop, right as a line forwards from your left foote, for if you stop halfe a foote wide with the forefoote of the streight arme as it were by rule, then you loose halfe a foote of your space betwixt you and your enemy, and if you step likewise a foote wide, then you loose likewise a foote  
of



of aduantage. For your instruction herein, when you practise in a chamber, looke what boord you stand vpon, you should in deliuering either of blow or thrust, alwaies steps soorth with your right foote vpon the same boord which the left foote standeth on, for looke how much you left your fore foote wide of the straight line towards your enemy, you loose so much in your reach forward, as in your practise you maie see the triall and vsed often in practise in some Chambers with your friend vntill you are perfect, and in your practise, keepe your left foote fast moored, that as an Anchor pulleth home the ship, so the left foote must pluck home the right foote and bodie into the right place of distance againe, or as the helme guideth the ship, euen so the left foote must guide the bodie, alwaies bearing thy full belly towards thy enemy, I meane the one shoulder so neere as the other, for if thou wreath thy bodie in turning the one side neare to thy enemy then the other, thou dost not stand in thy strength, nor so readie to performe an answer, as when thy whole bodie lieth towards thy enemy.

*The manners of a passage.*

**A** Passage is to bee made aduisedlie with a nimble actiuitie and celerity of the bodie, for hee which wil goe in with a passage & escape, or go cleere awaie with all, the which is verie hardly to bee done if thy enemy be skillfull, and therefore in the performance thereof, thou must haue great skill, much practise and good iudgement, especially in obseruing the point of thy enemies weapon, and like-  
wise

wife thou must not consume one iote of time in thy performance, for so soone as thou seest thy enemy beare his point steadie in anie garde, whether it bee high or low, as if hee doe beare his point a loft, then step in with thy left foote with a sudden iumpe, and clap thy Dagger vnder his Rapier crosse-waies, and so bearing vp his point ouer thy head, and at the verie same instant that thou ioynest with his Rapier, then chop in with thy Rapier point withall to offend him, but thou must consume no time in staying anie space betwixt thy Defence and Offence, for thou must not make two times of that which may be done at one time, and againe, it is thy greater aduantage to doe it quickly, if thy enemy doe lie in a steadie guard, but if hee keepe the point of his Rapier variable, then it is not to bee done but with the greatest danger of all.

The second opportunitie to passe vpon your enemy you haue, if your enemy doe carrie the point of his Rapier so low as your girdle stead, or thereabouts, then you must step in with your left foote, and with your dagger strike awaie the point of his Rapier, and with the same let your Rapier passe vnto his bodie, as before said, I meane both at one time.

The third aduantage is if your enemy doe laie the point of his Rapier neere, or vpon the ground, then step in with thy hindermost foote and crosse your Dagger ouerthwart his Rapier, keeping his Rapier downe, so that hee cannot raise his point before that you haue hit him, and are recouered to your distance againe.

The fourth waie is your being both in your guard accor-

according to the first picture, or anie other guard according to your practise, and then faine a thrust downe to his knee, but presentlie raise your point againe with a iumpe foure foote side-waies towards the left side of your enemy, and mount vp your Rapier hand withall, and put in your thrust ouer your enemies Dagger, into his Dagger shoulder, and so with all possible speede recouer your guard and distance againe, by springing or iumping towards the left hand of your enemy, and so you fall away from danger of his point: but in falling backe againe, your Dagger must be prepared to defend a second, or a parting thrust, if your enemy should charge you therewithall immediatly.

Yet there is another kinde of passage, and that is an answer vpon your enemies proffer, if your enemy do offer a thrust at you, defend it with turning downward the point of your Dagger, and at the very same instant slippe in with your left foote, and put in your thrust into his bodie, for by stepping in with the left foote it goeth in so strongly, that it is hardly to be preuented.

Some that are ignorant will say that it is not possible to defend a passage, but I say there is no deuise to hit a man neither with thrust nor blow, but there is a true defence to be shewne by one that is skilfull, but yet not euery one that professeth himselfe to be a Fencer cannot teach true defence, but it must be such as haue bene grounded in the true art of Defence by great practise, such a one it must be to teach defence.

*The danger of a passage is to be prevented  
three waies.*

**T**He first is by an active and nimble shift of the body by falling back with the right foote, & the danger being past to charge hastily vpon your enemy againe, but the best way is in lying in your guard according to the first picture, as your euemie commeth in with his passe suddenly vpon the first motion, fall your point, and in the very same time put him out withall, and with your Dagger onely defend his passage, if it bee charged at your body, by turning the point downeward, but if hee put it into your Dagger shoulder in manner of an Imbrokata, then you must not let fall your Dagger, except you leaue your Rapier to be a watchman for the defence of your sholder or with bearing them both together it may be defence.

*Another defence of a passage.*

**T**He single Rapier alone, being carried according vnto the rule of the single Rapier, as hereafter shalbe described when I come to that weapon, now if your euemie doe take the point of your Rapier, the which hee may very well doe by reason of the high cariage of him, if you bee not carefull to fall your point when you see him comming in, well if hee doe make seisure of your point, yet hee cannot stay your Rapier hand, but that you shall haue two foote of your Rapier and the hilts at your command for the defence of your bodie, which by swearinging or beating him ouer your bodie, towards your left side, and a little turning your bodie by falling backe with

with your foremost foote, this is a good defence for a passage: but indeed a man must haue practise, and bee as wee call them a good scholler, that is such as bee skilfull; for a passage cometh with such celerity, that one which is not vsed to it, cannot deserue the comming of it, for there is no thrust so swift, nor so daungerous as the passage, but yet there is no thrust, nor blow nor passage, but by skill and cunning it is to bee defended and auoided, for a man shall deserue the comming of a passage so plaine as a Hawke, when shee intendeth to flie at Check, sitting vpon the Pearch, a man may verie easily perceiue by the setting of her selfe to flie, indeed it is dangerous and deadly, except your minde bee vpon your businesse, for when you are at your play, you must expect a passage and false play as well as true play, or plaine thrusts, for the hurt of the passage is most dangerous of all and most mortall, for with a passage a man cannot say I will hurt my enemy but a little, as you may with any other thrust, being put in at the length, I meane obseruing a true distance, for hee that otherwise breaketh distance may be as soone hit himselfe, as hee hit another; therefore the passage is seldome or neuer vsed in fight, although they bee both neuer so skilfull in putting forth a passage, or if one can passe, and the other cannot, but hee that can passe wil be doubtfull lest, the other wil intrap him in his owne assault, for why may not thy enemy bee as skilfull as thy selfe, once if he meete thee in the field, hee sheweth himselfe valorous therein, and if it be thy fortune to hurt him by want of skill in a manner amongst men, hee is reported to be as good a man as thy selfe, in regard

he aduentured himselfe with that small skill hee had, and then in respect of an honest minde, ough test o shew him some fauor, if he be not too forward, whereby hee is like to endanger thee, but yet rather hurt, then be hurt, and rather kill, then be killed, if there be no remedie.

*False play at Rapier and Dagger.*

**Y**ou must proffer, or faine a thrust a foote aboue your enemies head, but presently plucke backe your hand againe, and put home your thrust which you meane to hurt your enemy withall vnder his Dagger arme, either vnto his body or thigh, as you will your selfe, but step not forth with your foote when you faine a thrust, but with the second thrust which you meane to speed your enemy withall, let then your foote and hand goe together, for in faining it ouer his head, it will seeme to him that you meane to hit him in the face, so that sodainely hee will lift vp his Dagger, thinking to saue his face, but he cannot put him downe so quickly againe but that you may hit him as aforesaid: againe if you profer or faine a thrust to your enemies knee, I meane more quicke then I can speake it, thrust it into his Dagger sholder, or to his face whether you list, for you shall finde them both vngarded, for when hee putteth downe his Dagger to defend the fained thrust, hee cannot lift him vp againe before you haue hit him as before said, if his Dagger arme were neuer so strong, nor neuer so ready, hee must put downe his Dagger and so hee will, or else you may hit him in the breast, for no man can tell whether the fained thrust will  
come



come home or not, but hee which doth thrust it, if the defence were neuer so skilfull, but now the onely way to defend a false thrust, is with the single Rapier, for when that the Dagger falleth to cleare the fained thrust from the body, then the Rapier must saue the vpper part, I meane the face and shoulder, by bearing him ouer your bodie as you doe at the single Rapier, and so by that meanes the Rapier will defend all the bodie so low as your knee. By false play a Rapier and Dagger may encounter against a Sword and Buckler, so that the Rapier man be prouident and carefull of making of his assault, that hee thrust not his Rapier into the others Buckler: but the false play to deceiue the Buckler, is by offering a fained thrust at the face of him that hath the Buckler, and then presently put it home to his knee or thigh, as you see occasion; for he will put vp his Buckler to saue his face, but can not put him downe againe before you haue hit him, as aforesaid.

Likewise you may proffer or faine a thrust to the knee of the Buckler man, and put it home to his buckler shoulder, or face; for if hee let fall his Buckler to saue below, hee can not put him vp time enough to defend the vpper parts of his body with his Buckler, but must trust for his defence, to his single Sword: wherefore it behooueth euerie man to be skilfull in the Backe-sword. The best way to make a false thrust, is to strike it downe by the out-side of your enemies Rapier hand, but not to thrust it home, and so presently bring vp the point of your Rapier, and thrust it home to his left shoulder; for if you thrust the fained thrust within the compasse of his Dagger, then it may be he will hit the point of your Rapier, in offe-

ring to breake the fained thrust; and if he doe but touch your Rapier in your first proffer, then you cannot recover your point to put home your second thrust, before hee hath recovered his guard, and so will preuent you : therefore, if you doe make a false thrust, present it without the circle or compasse of his Dagger, that in his defence he may misse the hitting of your point, then hath hee but the single Rapier to defend your second thrust, and he must make his preparation first before hand with his Rapier, if such an occasion be offered, otherwise it cannot be defended.

Now there be diuers other guards to be vsed at the Rapier and Dagger, but most of them wil aske a great deale more practise, to be perfect in, then this first guard, and yet not anie one of them more seuer for defence both of blow and thrust then this first garde is, and therefore I doe account it the master guard of all other, yet in a Schoole, to make change of your play, then the more guard the more commendable, so they be performed with discretion and iudgement: therefore I haue described those which I thinke necessary, although not so at large, as heereafter you shall haue them in a second booke; for at some times, and for some purposes, one guard may better serue then another: for change of guards may crosse some mens play, whereas if you vse but one guard, may in often play be worne threed-bare, therefore learne as many fashions of lying with thy weapons as thou canst, and then in thy often practise make triall which thou dost fit best withall, and that repose thy selfe vpon at thy most neede : for I haue knowne many that could well defend themselues at one gard better then

at another, although hee be a cunning teacher, yet he cannot make all his Schollers frame themselves vnto true defence, all vsing one guard, wherefore there must bee triall made; for if the Scholler be dull of conceit in one guard, yet it may be he will fit better vnto another, so those which I haue found by my triall and practise, to be guards of defence, I put them downe briefly as followeth, but I thinke it were as good left them vndone, as begunne and not end them, yet thou shalt haue a taste, for by a taste men shall see what wine is in the Butte.

*The crosse guard.*

**C**arry the point of your Dagger vpright, and the hilt so low as your girdle-stead, without putting your thumbe against the blade of your Dagger, but griping him fast in your hand, and the point of your Rapier vnder your Dagger hand according to the picture.

Lying thus in your guard, your bellie or breast will seeme to be open or vnguarded, so that he will make no doubt but to speede you in his first assault; but he charging you with a thrust, for your defence, if it be aboue the girdle-stead, then carry your Dagger steady ouer your bodie, keeping the point vpright and beare him towards your right side, but in your defence, doe not turne the point of your Dagger downwards, but presently bring him into his right place againe, and then vpon his offer or making of play, if he charge you aboue the girdle-stead, then defend it with the Dagger, and presently steppe in with your left foote, and thrust withall vnto what  
part

part of his bodie you list; but if he charge you vnder the gerdle-stead, then defend it with your Rapier, striking it downeward; now you must make your selfe ready to take your time of aduantage in your answering: I meane in the very motion of your enemies assault, defend and offend both with one time: if you both lie vpon this guard, looking who shall make play first, then make you a short thrust, but presently clap into your guard againe, and so you shall draw him to make play, and yet be firme and ready in your guard to take your greater aduantage, which must be done vpon your enemies charge; for when he hath charged you with his thrust, and you defended your selfe, as before-saide, then steppe in with your left foote to answer his assault, presently vpon your defence. Now if your enemy lying in this guard, and wil not make play, then the best aduantage which you haue of your enemy, is charging him (in a manner) as it were with a wrist or a dropping blow to his face, breast, or knee, putting it in slope wise, by turning your knuckles inward, and when it is lighted on the place which you determine to hit; then thrust it home withall, and this thrust being put in slope wise, is the best thrust to hit him which lieth in the crosse guard, and the defender must be ready and nimble with his Dagger for his defence; or otherwise to be preuented: but for a stroake, or a fore-right plaine thrust, it is with more ease defended by him which hath the perfectnesse of this guard, then it is by lying in anie other guard.

Now if your enemy doe lie on this crosse guard, you may proffer a fained thrust at his breast, and presently put it into his Dagger shoulder on the out-side

of

of his dagger arme: this false thrust may be defended with a quicke bringing backe of the Dagger againe: but then the defender must not ouer-carry his dagger to defend the false thrust, yet hee must carry him against euery offer.

Another defence belonging to this guard is lying in this crosse guard, if your enemy charge you vnder the gerdle-stead with a thrust, strike it by with your Rapier, by letting fall your Rapier point towards the ground; but if it come aboue, then defend it with your Dagger, as before, but do not carry your Dagger aboue halfe a foote; for if you ouer-carry your Dagger, you may be endangered by the false play. Againe, if you make the first proffer, and your enemy lying in this guard, then, so soone as you haue made your thrust at him, presently let fall the point of your Rapier to the ground-ward, lifting vp your Rapier hand, and defend his answere with your Rapier, by striking it outward, I meane towards your right hand, so that his thrust may goe cleare on your right side, for your Dagger will not defend your enemies answere so well as your Rapier, especially vpon this guard.

Many haue had a good opinion of the stokata gard, but (in my minde) it is more wearisome vnto the bodie, and not so defensiuie for the body, as the first gard following the first Picture; my reasons are these, the hilt and rapier hand being borne so farre back behind the bodie, it cannot defend a blow, for the blow will light before you can beare out your rapier to beare the blow backesword-way, as it should be done, neither can the Rapier defend a false thrust, and a false thrust must be defended with the Rapier onelic: Also

the point of the Rapier being borne so lowe as this guard restraineth them, the face and breast lieth open, or else vnto a single defence which is not sure; therefore keepe two strings to thy bowe, it is safe riding at two anchors a head, but if a man were put to an extremitie, then it were better to haue halfe a loafe then no bread, better to defend it single, then to take it on the skinne, and so I will with words describe this guard, and some other.

*The Stokata guard.*

**Y**OU must (if you will frame your selfe into this guard) keepe the Dagger point out-right, and so hie as your cheeke, and your Rapier hand so farre backe, and something low as you can, and your feete three foote distance at the least, and this guard many Professours doe reach as the chiefe and maister guard of all other; Now the reasons which they shew to draw men into this guard; is first say they, the head bowing backe, then the face is furthest from danger of a thrust or blow: now to answer this againe, I say, that although the face be something further from the enemye, yet the bottome of the bellie, and the fore leg is in such danger, that it cannot be defended from one that is skilfull; and to bee hurt in the bellie is more dangerous then the face, whereas if thou frame thy guard according vnto my direction following the first Picture, then shalt thou finde that thy bellie is two foote (at the least) further from danger of a thrust, and so is the foote likewise, and the leg safe and out of danger both of blow and thrust: and now thy face will seeme to be, and is the neere part towards



wards thine enemy, but then thou hast thy dagger being in his right place, nearest vnto thy face, readie to defend him: againe, hee which standeth abroad with his feete, will alwayes be in ieaiousie of his fore leg, the which must be defended by plucking him vp nimbly at euerie blowe and thrust, and yet that will not surely defend him from a thrust, but admit you do defend the leg by plucking him vp, then doe you loose your time of answering your enemy, which should bee done in the same time which you plucke vp your leg, and before you can come in againe with your answer, your enemy will haue recovered his guard and distance againe: There are many other guards, some of them I will touch alittle, and some of them I will leaue vntill an other time: there are three high guardes, one of them I will speake next of, because it is a great enemy, not onelie vnto the Stokata garde, but it likewise crosseth all other guardes, and it followeth in this maner.

Keepe your thumbe long wayes vpon the blade of your Rapier, according vnto the naturall Arte; the common holding of the vulgar sort, and your feete so close together, as you can, and the hilt of your Rapier so hie as your cheeke, bowing the elbowe ioynt of your Rapier arme, and your Dagger hilt so lowe as your gerdle steade, and beare the point of your Dagger vpright, and the Rapier point on the in-side of your Dagger, both close together, looking vnder your Rapier, and beare out your Dagger at the armes end, without bowing your elbow ioynt; and if your enemy charge you with a thrust, carrie the thrust with your Dagger toward the right side, keeping the point of your Dagger vpright, not turning

ning him in your defence this way nor that way, but beare him steady ouer your body, and so you may defend any manner of thrust: for if you beare your dagger (as aforesaide) your enemies point will passe cleere vnder your Rapier arme, but hauing once defended, in the very same motion you must lift vp the hilt of your Rapier, and turning your knuckle vppward, and withall, turne your point downe into your enemies rapier shoulder, stepping forth with the right foote and hand together, your defence and offence must be all done with one motion. Now if your enemy charge you with a blow, you are as ready to defend it double on this guard as in any other: but if thou charge thine enemy, or make the first assault, prepare thy defence for the Rapier shoulder, by carrying thy Dagger ouer thy bodie, keeping the point of thy Dagger vpright. This defence is good to be vsed against a left handed man likewise.

Now he which is well experimented in this guard hee will finde it verie dangerous for offence to thine enemy, and defensiu for thy selfe, aboue all other guardes, especially if thou haue discretion to lie at watch discretely, and to take thine opportunitie and aduantage, when thine enemy proffereth any kinde of play vpon thee.

*The carleffe or the lazie guard.*

**L**Ay the point of your Rapier vpon the ground a foote wide of your left side ouerthwart your bodie, and let the hilt of your rapier rest vpon your right

right thigh, and your dagger vnder your rapier about a foot forward of the hilt, and so leauing your whole belly or brest, will seeme a verie faire baite for your enemy to thrust at, but when hee chargeth you with a thrust, your defence must bee by the lifting vp of your Rapier point, with your Dagger, throwing him ouer towards your right side, but lift not vp your Rapier hand in the time of your defence in anie case, for so it may endanger the face, but so soone as you haue turned it cleere ouer your bodie with both your weapons as aforesaid (it may bee done with one of them, but not so well because not so sure as with both together) then vpon your defence recover your point hastily againe and chop him in with an ouer-hand thrust, turning your knuckles vpwards into his right shoulder where you may easily hit him if you bee quicke in taking your time before hee recover his distance, or get out of your reach. This is no painefull guard, but verie easie and quickly learned, and it is a verie sure guard to defend any manner of thrust, now vpon this guard if your enemy doe falsifie a thrust vpon you by offering it at breast or face, whereby to make you lift vp your weapons, thinking to hit you beneath with a second thrust by reason of your lifting them vp to saue the other parts the which you must doe, but sayling of it aboue, bring downe your Dagger quickly againe to defend below the second thrust.

*The fore-hand guard at Rapier and  
Dagger.*

**P**Vt thy Rapier hand vnder the hilt of thy Dagger, alwaies keeping the point of thy Rapier something variable, and yet something directly about the girdle-stead of thyemie, and the point of thy Dagger in a manner vpright, or a verie little leaning towards thy left side, and both thy Dagger and thy Rapier hilts together, and both so low as thy girdle-stead: those being guarded, if thyemie doe charge thee with a thrust, carrie thy Dagger quicke ouer towards thy right side, and make a present answer by chopping out the point of thy Rapier, and so hastily into thy guard againe, expecting a fresh charge.

*The broad warde.*

**B**Eare out both your armes right out from your bodie stiffe at the armes end, and a foote at the left a sunder, and turne both the Rapier and Dagger hilts so high as your ibrest or hier, leauing all your bodie open, or vngarded to seeme to, and when youremie doth charge you with a thrust, strike it with your Dagger towards your right side, and withall answer him againe with an ouer-hand thrust vnto his Dagger shoulder, but you must keepe your thumb vpon the blade of your rapier, for then shall you put in your thrust the more steddier, and the more stronger.

*The*

*The names of the chiefeſt thruſts, which are uſed at Rapier and Dagger, with the manner how to perſorme them.*

**A** Right Stock, or Stockata, is to bee put in vpwards with ſtrength and quickneſſe of the bodie, and the guard for the putting in a ſtoke is leaning ſo farre backe with your face and bodie as you can, and the hilts of your Rapier ſo neere the ground, or ſo low as you can, but of this guard I haue ſpoken ſufficientlie alreadie.

A ſlope Stocke is to be made vnto your enemies breaſt, or vnto his Rapier ſhoulder, if hee doe looke ouer his Rapier, but in putting it in, you muſt wheele about your Rapier hand, towards your left ſide, turning your knuckles inward, this thruſt being put in ſlope wiſe as aforeſaid, will hit thy enemy which lieth vpon the Croſſe-guard, or the Careleſſe-guard, or the Broad-ward, when a right Stock or plaine fore right thruſt will not hit.

An Imbrokata, is a falſifying thruſt, firſt to proffer it towards the ground, ſo low as your enemies knee, and then preſently put it home vnto your enemies Dagger-ſhoulder, or vnto anie part of his Dagger-arme, for hee will put downe his Dagger to defend your ſained thruſt, but cannot recouer his Dagger againe before you haue hit him in the Dagger arme, Shoulders or Face, whether you will your ſelfe, for in proffering this thruſt, there is no waie to defend the vpper part, the Dagger being once downe, but onely with ſingle Rapier, and except a man doe expect it, it cannot be ſo defended neither.

*An*

*An other thrust called a Reuerse.*

**A** Reuerse is to be made, when your enemie by gathering in vpon you, causeth you to fall backe with your right foote, and then your left foote being formost, keeping vp your dagger to defend, and hauing once broken your enemies thrust with your dagger, presently come in again with your right foote, and hand together, and so put in your reuerse vnto what part of his bodie you please, for it will come with such force that it is hard to be preuented.

*A thrust called a Mountanto.*

**T**He Mountanto is to be put in with a good celeritie of the bodie and in this manner, you must frame your guard when you intend to charge your enemie with this thrust, beare your Rapier hard vpon, or so neere the ground as you can, lying verie low with your bodie, bowing your left knee verie nere the ground also, and either vpon your enemies thrust or inlying in his guard you may strike his rapier point toward your right side with your dagger so that it may passe cleere vnder your rapier arme, and with the same motion as you strike his rapier, sodainely mount vp your Rapier hand higher then your head, turning your knuckles vpward, but turne the point of your Rapier downwards ouer his Rapier arme into his breast or shoulder, and you must be quicke in the performance of this thrust, and likewise nimble you must leape out againe. This thrust must bee put in by the stepping forward of your left leg: now if you vse this thrust more then once, your enemie



emie will expect your comming aloft with him as you did before, but then put it in the second or third time vnderneath, and you shall hit him about the girdle-stead, and so because at this time I will not bee ouer tedious I leaue to speake of manie other thrusts.

*The best way for the holding of a Dagger, either to breake blow or thrust, and foure waies bad as followeth.*

**F**irst, if you hold your dagger too high, you may be hit vnder the Dagger-arme.

Secondly, and if too low, you may bee hit ouer the Dagger-arme, either in the arme, shoulder or face.

Thirdly, & if you beare your dagger too much towards your rapier-shoulder, then you may bee hurt on the out-side of the arme by bearing narrow, for so we call the carriage of him, being borne in this manner before spoken of.

Fourthly, if too wide from your bodie you may bee hurt on the in-side of the arme, face or breast: if the dagger-elbowe ioyned bee crooked, then there is small force in the dagger-arme for the defence of blow, or thrust, but the dagger being borne out stiffe at the armes end, defendeth a blow strongly, as you shall heare by and by.

*Foure waies naught to breake a thrust.*

**F**irst, if you breake a thrust downe-wards, it may hit you in the bottom of the bellie.

— Secondly, if you breake him vpwads it may  
T endan-

endanger you in the face.

Thirdly, and if you breake your enemies thrust towards your Rapier-side, it may hit you in the Rapier-arme.

Fourthly, or in breaking a thrust, if you let the weight of your Dagger carrie your Dagger-arme backe behinde you, then your enemy may with a double thrust hit you before you can recouer vp your Dagger in his place againe.

*A good way to defend a thrust or blow.*

**T**He best holding of a Dagger is right out at the armes end, and the hilt euen from your left checke, and the point compassing your bodie, I meane bowing towards your Rapier-shoulder, and when you breake a thrust, turne but only your hand-wrist about, letting fall the point of your Dagger downe-ward, but keepe out your Dagger-arme so stiffe as you can, so shall you bee readie to defend twentie thrusts one after another, if they come neuer so thicke, and likewise you are as readie for a blow; whereas if you fall your arme when you breake your thrust, your enemy may hit you with a second thrust before you can recouer your Dagger in his place to defend it, for a thrust goeth more swifter then an arrow shot out of a bow, wherefore a man cannot bee too ready, nor too sure in his gard; Now both for defence and Offence of euery blow and thrust, thou must turne thy knuckles vp-ward, or downe-ward, inward or out-ward, alwaies turning your hand according to the nature of the guard, that you frame your selfe vnto, or according as when you see your enemies

mies guard, then you must determine before you charge your enemy either with blow, or thrust, in what manner to turne your hand in your Offence or Defence, sometimes after one manner, and sometimes after another, as both before and hereafter shalbe sufficiently satisfied more at large.

*The true guard for the single Rapier.*

**K**eepe your Rapier point something sloping towards your left shoulder, and your Rapier hand so low, as your girdle-stead, or lower, and beare out your Rapier hand right at the armes end, so farre as you can, and keepe the point of your Rapier something leaning outwards toward your enemy, keeping your Rapier alwaies on the out-side of your enemies Rapier, but not ioyning with him, for you must obserue a true distance at all weapons, that is to say, three foote betwixt the points of your weapons, and twelue foote distance with your fore foote from your enemies fore foote, you must bee carefull that you frame your guard right, now you must not beare the Rapier hand-wide of the right side of your bodie, but right forward from your girdle-stead, as before-said.

*The Reasons of this guard.*

**I**N keeping your point something sloping or compassing your face, your enemy cannot offend you with a wrist blow, which if you keepe your point directly vpright, you may verie easily bee hit in the face.

Being guarded as before said, if your enemy discharge a thrust at you, carrie your Rapier hand ouer your bodie towards you left side, keeping your point directly in his place vntill you haue defended your enemies assault, then presently after let fall the point of your Rapier, turning your knuckles inwards, and discharge your thrust at your enemies thigh, or bodie, as you see occasion.

There are likewise many other guards to be framed  
at

at single Rapier, as that one of the short Sword is a good guard at some times, and for some purposes, if a man be perfect in it, by skill and practise aforehand, as heereafter you shall see the manner thereof more at large, when I come to that weapon.

Now another fashion is, by holding your left hand vpon the blade, and so with the strength of your forefinger and thumbe of your left hand, you may breake your enemies thrust cleere off your bodie, by turning of your rapier point downe-ward or vp-ward accordingly, as your enemy chargeth you; and then charge your enemy againe with a quicke answer.

Now another is, by standing vpon the stocke, ready to choppe in vpon your enemies assault, but you must turne in your left shoulder to your enemy nearer then the right, onelie to be as it were a baite vnto him, but when he doth thrust at you, wheele about your bodie, falling backe with your left foote; but withall, thrust out your rapier, and so you may hit, and defend, onelie with the shift of the bodie, and you shall find that the oppressor will come vpon his owne death, by proffering at that shoulder, which you make shew to be open vnto him: but you must not offer to defend it with your rapier, but only trust vnto the shift of your bodie.

*False play at the single Rapier.*

**I**F your enemy doe lie in this guard, according to this Picture, then proffer or faine a thrust vnto his left side, but presently plucke backe your hand, and thrust it home vnto his right arme shoulder or face; for hee will carry his rapier ouer his bodie, to defend

the fained thrust, but can hardly bring him backe againe to saue your second or determined thrust, except hee be very skilfull, a stieue, or nimble: now if he doe not beare his Rapier to defend the fained thrust when you proffer it, then you may hit him with a plaine thrust the second time, if you put it home without falsing it at all.

*Another deceit.*

**L**ikewise, you may proffer or faine a thrust two foot wide of your enemie his right side, and presently thrust it home to his breast, for hee will beare his rapier beyond the compasse of true defence, by reason it will seeme vnto a cunning player that your intention is to hit him on the out side of the Rapier arme, so that when he thinketh to strike your point from offending his arme, by that means hee will open his bodie, although he open himselfe but a little, yet with your second thrust you may hit him as aforesaid.

*The defence of this false play.*

**Y**OU must be very carefull that you doe not overcarry your Rapier in the defence of anie manner of thrust, yet you must carrie him a little against euery proffer which your enemie doth make: for if a man be verie skilfull, yet is he not certaine when his enemie doth charge his point vpon him, and proffer a thrust, whether that thrust will come home, or no: wherefore (as I said) you must beare your Rapier against euery thrust to defend it, but beare him but halfe



halfe a foote towards the left side, for that will cleare the bodie from danger of his thrust, and so quicke backe againe in his place, whereby to meete his weapon on the other side, if he charge you with a second thrust, thinking to deceiue you as aforesaid.

*A slippe at single Rapier.*

**N**OW if your enemy doe charge you with a blow, when as you see the blow comming, plucke in your Rapier, and let the blow slippe, and then answer him againe with a thrust, but bee carefull to plucke in your rapier to that cheeke which hee chargeth you at, so that if the blow doe reach home, you may defend him according vnto the rule of the back-sword.

The defence of this slippe is to forbear striking at all, but if you doe strike, not to ouer-strike your Sword, but so strike your blow as you may recover him into his place hastily againe; for in fight if you doe strike, you must forbear strong blowes, for with a strong blow, you may fall into diuers hazzards; therefore strike an easie blow, and doe it quicke, but to thrust, and not strike at all, is to thy best advantage.

*Another slippe.*

**P**Vt your thumbe long wayes, or forward vpon the handie of your rapier according vnto the natural fashion, and your enemy lying in this guard, ioyne your Rapier according as the Picture, and so soone as you haue ioyned, turne the heele of your hand

hand vpward, and your point downeward, and so bring your point, compassing vnder your enemies right elbow; and then with the strength of the thumb turne it into his breast: the like you may doe if your enemy offer to close with you at single rapier, for if hee come hastily vpon you, you can not drawe out your point whereby to offend him, but by turning it in as before-said, you may hit the skilfullest man that is in his comming in: Now, if hee doe defend your point below, you may by a sodaine turning vp your point, thrust it home to his right shoulder or face, whether you will your selfe.

*The defence of this slippe.*

**I**F your enemy doe ioyne his weapon with yours, to close or to turne in a slippe, then make your selfe readie quickly, by putting your thumbe vpon your rapier, as aforesaid, when he falleth his point towards his left hand, to fetch the compasse of your rapier arme; then fall your point the contrary way, I meane towards your left hand, so shall you meete with his weapon below againe, and this will defend your selfe; and when he raiseth his point againe, then doe you raise yours likewise into his place againe.

*Another Slippe.*

**I**F your enemy doe ioyne his rapier with yours, and doe beare him strongly against you, thinking to ouer-beare you by strength of arme, then so soone as hee beginneth to charge you strongly, beare your rapier a little against him, and then sodainely let fall your

your point so low, as your gerdle-steed, and thrust it home withall, and so you may hit him, for by letting his Rapier goe away sodainely, he swayeth away beyond the compasse of defence, so that you may hit him, and fall away againe before hee can recouer his Rapier to endanger you.

*A dazeling thrust at single Rapier or Backe-sword.*

**P**roffer or faine a thrust at the fairest part of your enemies bodie which lieth most vnguarded, and then more quicker then I can speake it, thrust it in on the other side, and so changing three or foure times, and then choppe it home sodainely, and you shall find his bodie vnguarded, by reason that he will carrie his Rapier or Sword this way or that way, thinking to defend the false thrust, because he supposeth them to be true thrusts: for there is no man so cunning, that knoweth if a thrust be proffered within distance, but that it may hit him, or whether it will be a false thrust, or no, the defender knowes not, and therefore he must prepare his defence against euery thrust, that is proffered.

*A close at single Rapier or at Backe-sword.*

**F**irst, charge your enemy with a thrust aloft with an ouer-hand thrust, directly at your enemies face, and withall follow it in close, bearing your your enemies point ouer your head, by the carrying vp of your Rapier hand, and then may you make seisure on the hilt of your enemies Rapier or Sword, or on his hand-wrist with your left hand, and then hauing made seisure of his weapon, you may then vse  
V what

what execution you wil, I mean either blow or thrust,  
or trip vp his heeles.



*The guard for the Backe-sword.*

**C**Arrie your Sword-hilt out at the armes end, and  
your point leaning or sloping towards your left  
shoulder, but not ioyning with your enemies  
weapon, as this Picture seemeth, but so long as you  
lie in your guard, let there be three foote distance  
betwixt your weapons, but if your enemy do charge  
you, either with blow or thrust, carrie your Sword  
ouer your bodie against your enemies assault, and  
so crosse with him according to the Picture, beare al-  
so your point stedie ouer your bodie, something slo-  
ping towards your left shoulder; I meane the point  
must goe so farre as the hilt, but not turning your  
point the contrarie waie, but carrie them both toge-  
ther,

ther. I will make it plainer by and by, because I would haue thee to vnderstand it wisely, for hauing with a true defence defended your enemies blow or thrust by crossing with him, or by bearing your weapon against his assault (as before said) the danger being past, then presently at the same instant, and with one motion turne downe the point of your Sword, turning your knuckles inward, and so thrusting it home to your enemies thigh, but with all, steppe forth with your foote and hand together.

But there is a great obseruation to be had in your practise concerning the true carriage of your point, for in your defence if you do not carrie your Sword, true, then it is hard to defend either blowe or thrust; for if you carrie the hilt of your Sword against either blow or thrust, and doe not carrie the point withall leuell, euen as you lay in your guard according to the Picture; then your hand and face is endangered, but bearing the hilt and the point about a foot ouer your bodie towards your left side; and likewise to beare your Sword stiffe out at the armes end, without bowing of your elbow ioynt: provided alwaies, that your Sword being in your right hand, you must look with both your eyes on the in-side of your Sword, for then you haue but one kinde of defence, so that the point of your Sword be sloping toward the left shoulder: but otherwise, if you keepe the point of your Sword vpright, then your enemy hath three waies to endanger you, especiallie, if you carrie your Sword right before the middest of your bellie, with the point vpright, as I haue knowne some hold an opinion of that waie to be good, but I say, hee that trusteth to that guard, may be hit in the head with a sodaine wrist-blow,

blow, if his practise were neuer so good : and likewise both his armes are vnguarded, and to bee endangered, either with blow or thrust ; but if you guard your selfe after my direction, then your enemy hath but one-lie the left side of your head, and your legges open, and they are easie to be defended ; the legge, by plucking him vp, the which you must doe vpon euerie blow, which your enemy chargeth you withall, and with the same defend the head and bodie, carrying your Sword ouer your bodie towards your left side, the point and hilt both steadie, as I haue before said.

Now although I heere speake altogether of a Backe-Sword, it is not so meant, but the guard is so called : and therefore, whether you are weaponed with a two edged Sword, or with a Rapier, yet frame your garde in this manner and forme, as before said.

*An other very sure and dangerous guard at the Backe-sword, called the Vnicorne guard, or the fore-hand guard.*

**B**Eare the Sword hilt so high as your face, keeping him out at the armes end, without bowing of your elbow ioynt, and alwaies keepe your point directly vpon your enemies face, and your knuckles of your sword hand vpward ; but if your enemy doe charge you with a blow to the right side of your head, then turne but your Sword hilt, and your knuckles outward, still keeping your Sword arme stiffe in his place, turning but onelie your wrist and your hand : this is a very dangerous guard to your enemy,



emie being carried with a strong arme, for by reason that you keepe him out at the points end, being so directly in his face, that hee cannot come neare you without great danger, either of blow or thrust, but indeed if your sword be not carried out with a strong arme, then youremie may endanger your head by striking of two blowes together, the one being strooke at the point of your sword to stricke him downe and the other to your head but they must bee strooke both together verie sodainelie, or else there is small danger in them, now if you are warie in watching when hee makes his first blow, sodainely plucke in the point of your sword to you, and so by that slippe his first stroake hee will ouer carrie him, so that if you turne an ouer-hand blow to his head, you may hit him before hee can recover his sword to strike his second blow, or defend himselfe lying in this long guard, you may slippe euerie blow that is strooke, plucke in your sword euen as you see youremie stricke and turne it ouer to the right side of his head.

*A Close at back-sword.*

**L**ying in thy guard according vnto the picture at single Rapier, and when you meane to close, lift vp the hilt of thy word so high as thy cheeke, and charge thyemie with a thrust dire&lie at his face, and with the same motion steppe in with thy hindmost foote, turning the knuckles of thy Sword-hand inward, and so bearing thyemies point ouer thy head, and then catch hold on thyemies Sword-hilt, or on his hand-wrist with thy left hand,

but on his hilt is the surest to hold, and then you may either trip vp his heeles, or cut, or thrust him with your weapon, and in this manner you maie close with a Rapier also, if you can make your partie good at the gripe or close, for your enemy in bearing ouer his Sword ouer his bodie to defend his face from your thrust, he there by carieth awaie his point, so that hee cannot endanger you if you follow it in close and quicke.

*False play with the Back-sword.*

**Y**Our enemy being in his guard, and lying at watch for aduantage, you maie faine a blow at the right-side of his head, and presently with the turning of your hand-wrist, strike it home to his left-side, which being done quicke you may hit a reasonable good plaier, for he will beare his sword against the fained blow, and by that meanes vnguard his left-side but at no hand you must not let the fained blow touch your enemies sword, but giue your sword a sodaine checke and so strike it to the contrarie-side, for if your feined blow do ioine with your enemies sword, it will staie his sword within the compasse of true defence, so that hee will be readie to defend your false blow, but otherwise if you touch not his sword hee will carrie him beyond the true compasse of defence, of the second blow, which you determine to hit him withall, so likewise you may faine your blow at the left-side of your enemies head, but presentlie strike it home to the right-side of his head, in manner as aforesaid.

*Another false play.*

**A** Gaine, you may ioine your sword within you enemies sword according vnto the picture, but presentlie so soone as you haue ioyned, strike it downe to his legge, but nimblie recouer your sword in his place againe falling a little awaie withall, for so soone as you haue discharged your blow, you may verie easilie before hee can endanger you recouer your guard and distance: likewise you maie giue a back-blow vnto the right side of his head, and presentlie withall, fall downe againe with another blow vnto the inside of his legge, stepping home with your second blow, for when you haue made your first blow as aforesaid, it may bee your enemy will winke, and so you may hit his legge before his eyes open againe, so that you do it quick, but if he doe not winke, yet a good plaier will thinke that when hee hath defended your first blow a loft, hee will not expect a blow so sodainelie as this ought to be strooke, and therefore may be hit with a second blow, yea although hee looke well to himselfe, and the rather that manie doth not allow in there teaching a backe-sword blow to be stroken at the legge, but I say a man may giue a square, or fore-hand blow to the inside of his enemies legge, and yet verie well recouer vp your sword againe before your enemy can endanger you.

*Another deceipt.*

**S**tanding in your guard, and your enemy charging you with a blow, pluck in your sword sodainelie, and let his blow slippe, and so soone as his blow  
is

is past, answere him againe, either with blow or thrust whether you will, but if it bee at blunt with a blow, put in right with a thrust, or by plucking in your sword, and alwaies haue a care you plucke him in vnto that side of the head which hee chargeth you at, for in so doing, if his weapons point do reach home, yet you are at a guard of defence, but with this skill and a little withdrawing your bodie with all, his weapon will passe cleare, for the force of his blow will ouerswaie his weapon, and he will so ouer carrie his bodie, that in a manner his backe wilbe towards you, so that with a quick answere you may but him at your pleasure or close with him if you thinke you can make your partie good at the gripe: likewise you may cloose vpon the crosse, by ioyning weapon to weapon, but when you haue made your cloose in your first encounter, take hold on your enemies hand-wrist, or else on the hilt of your enemies weapon, for then hee cannot well offend you being but single weaponed. But to trie your man-hood, at the length of your weapon, I hold it the best fight and lesse danger to both, for there is no more certaine defence in a close, then is in a passage, for they are both verie dangerous.

*Another deceipt.*

**Y**Our enemy lying in guard, you may strike a backe blow vnto his right eare, although it light vpon his sword, that is all one, for in striking it aboue, it may cause him to wink, or he will thinke you haue don, but so soone as you haue deliuered your blow aboue, then presentlie, I meane more quicker then

then I can speake it, strike it downe into the inside of his right-legge, or if you doe but touch his sword in ioyning him close as the picture standeth, and so soone as you haue but touched his Backe-sword on the out-side, strike it downe vnto the in-side of the legge presentlie, yet alwaies haue a care to recouer your sword into his place againe for your owne defence, the which you may easilie doe, yea although you encounter with a verie skilfull man, but if you strike a plaine blow at the legge without profering it aboue first, as is before said, then you endanger your owne head, but in presenting it aboue, you busie him to defend the first fained blow, so that he cannot be readie prepared to charge you with anie blow of danger before you haue recovered your guard, the which you may well doe, although he answere you neuer so quicke.

*An other verie cunning deceipt with the  
Back-sword.*

**S**Trike a blow to the in-side of the right leg, or foot of thy enemy, but draw it to thee, striking it something short, and then presently strike it home againe to the left eare of a right handed man, but it must be done more quicker then I can speake it, and thou shalt finde his left eare vngarded, for hee will looke for it at the right side, and it were not amisse to strike it once or twice from the leg to the right eare first, for then he will looke for the same blow againe, but yet I would not haue you make all your play at the legge, but sometimes to offer a blow at the one side of the head, and then to the other, so by making

king often change of your blow, is the best waie to deceiue thy enimie.

*A verie dangerous blow at Back-sword.*

**T**Hy enimie lying in this guard, soddenly plucke in the pummell of thy sword to thy breast, and with all turne thy knuckles inward, and the presentlie proffer a thrust towards thy enemies breast, but turne it ouer with a blow to his right eare, with the which blow thou maist hit a good plaier, if he bee not aware of it before hand, for hee must beare his sword against the thrust for the defence thereof, now if he do ouer carrie him neuer so little further then he ought to doe for his true defence, then hee cannot bring him back time enough to defend the blow before you haue hit him, as before said.

*This blow is also good for a Left-handed man, or against a Left-handed man.*

**I**F you would hit a Left-handed man with this blow, then present your thrust full at his face by a sodaine lifting vp the hilt of your sword so high as your head, and withall you must now turne your knuckles outward, and so soone as you haue presented your thrust, presently strike it home vnto the left side of his head.



*A false thrust to be vsed in fights at Back-sword.*

**P**roffer your thrust two or three foot wide of thy enemies left eare, and withall let fall thy point so low as thy enemies girdle-stead or lower, and then presently with the same motion, raise thy point on the other side of thy enemies sword, and chop it home vnto his right arme, shoulder or face whether you will your selfe, for in bearing his sword ouer his bodie to defend the fained thrust, hee cannot well recouer him backe againe to defend your second thrust before you haue hit him, as before said, except hee hath by much practise beene vsed to that false thrust before hand.

*An other dangerous blow.*

**T**hy enemy lying in his guard, strike a blow to the in-side of his right leg, and presentlie with as much speed as possible thou canst strike it home vnto his left cheeke, for he will beare ouer his sword to defend the first proffer, and so with-draw himselfe into his guard, so that he will be vnprouided for the defence of his left side, if it bee struck in with a quicke hand. All manner of false blowes, slips and thrusts at what weapon soeuer, are to be auoided and defended with the true carriage of thy weapon, as at Rapier and Dagger, if a false thrust be made below, it must be defended with the Dagger below, and with the Rapier aboue. And if either blow or thrust be falsified at the Back-sword, or at Sword and Dagger, thou must beare thy Sword against euery proffer,

but be sure thou do not ouer-carrie him, but that thou maist be quick backe againe, to meete his second blow on the other side, as bringing thy weapon into his place by practise, thou shalt finde thy selfe surely guarded as in some places in this booke thou shalt finde the defence.

After the false play at euerie weapon, although I haue not set downe the defence of euerie slip, nor of euerie fault, which had beene verie necessarie: for as euerie lesson on a fiddle hath a feuerall tune, euen so euerie guard and euerie falsitie hath a feuerall kinde of Offence, and Defence, but heere thou shalt finde the Defence that belongeth vnto manie of them, and the rest I left out for want of leasure to write them, but they shall follow in the next Impression.

*The true guard for the Staffe, which we will  
call the Low guard.*

**K**Eepe the point of your Staffe right in your enemies face, holding one hand at the verie butt end of the Staffe, and the other a foote and a halfe distant, looking ouer your Staffe with both your eyes and your feet a foot and a half distance, or thereabouts, according to this picture, alwaies standing crosse with your enemy, I meane, if his right hand and foote be foremost, let yours be so likewise, and if his left-hand and foote be foremost, then make you your change and crosse with him also.

Now



Now, if your enemy doe charge you, either with blow or thrust, you lying in the guard, as above shewed, then your defence is thus : and if he charge you about the girdle-steade, either with blow or thrust, strike your selfe against it, keeping vp the point of your staffe, so high as your head ; but so soone as you haue defended, whether it be blow or thrust, presently answer your enemy againe with a thrust, and then hastily recouer your guard againe, and in giuing of a thrust, you may let goe your fore-hand from off your Staffe, but hold the butte end fast in one hand : and so soone as you haue discharged your thrust, plucke backe your Staffe, and clap both your hands on him againe, and recouer your guard; but yet stay not long, to see whether your enemy will beginne with you, but begin with him first, with a false thrust,

as anone you shall see the manner how to doe it : and when you can doe it , what neede you to stand long about that which may be done presently, and without danger?

Now if hee proffer either blow or thrust vnto your lower parts vnder your gerdle-stead, if it be a thrust, strike it awaie, by turning the point of your Staffe towards the ground, but be sure to strike it with that large compasse, that the point of your Staffe maie pitch, not in the ground, for so you may deceiue your selfe in your defence, if he charge you so lowe with a blow, then you may strike it as you do a thrust, or you may pitch the point of your staffe into the ground two or three foote wide of that side which he chargeth you at, and you may in the pitching downe of your Staffe, let goe your fore-hand, that hee doe not hit him, and then all parts is defended so high as your head, so that you alwaies haue a care to keepe your staffe in his right place, that is to say, if your right hand and foote be formost, then leaue all your bodie open, so that your enemy can not endanger you on the out-side of your staffe, but if hee will hit you, he must needs strike or thrust on the in-side of your staffe, and then you must defend all blowes or thrusts, by bearing your staffe ouer your bodie towards the left side, for this we call the Fore hand Defence, and this defence consumeth no time : but if in holding your staffe in the right hand, as before is said, and yet for your garde doe beare your Staffe ouer towards the left hand, then you leaue your right shoulder arme or face, open or vnguarded, the which must bee defended backward, but you may defend twentie thrusts or blowes before hand, better then

then one backward; for the backe defence is nothing so readie, nor so certaine, as the fore-hand defence is, and therefore keepe and continue your guard, according vnto the Picture, for then if hee proffer a thrust on the out-side of your Staffe: you neede not to feare nor offer to defend it, for there is no place in anie danger, but all is guarded, especiallie from the gerdle-stead vpward.

And in your defence, haue alwaies a care to the true carriage of your Staffe, that you doe not carrie him beyond the compasse of true defence, for feare of the false plaie: for if you ouer-carrie your Staffe, I meane further then neede doth require, you can not recouer him backe againe quicke enough to defend the false. Now, if your enemy doe assault you vpon the contrarie side, you must change both your foote and hand to crosse with him, as before: but take heed when you change, you do not come in with your hinder foote, but let him stand firme and fall backe with the fore-most foot vpon euerie change. And hauing defended your enemies assault, with a little encreasing in, answere him with a thrust, thrusting out your staffe with your hindermost hand, and stepping forth withall, with your foremost foote, and in the same instant of your proffer, let goe your fore-hand, but after your offence presently recouer your hand vpon your staffe againe: now if your staffe be shorter then your enemies, then (for your better aduantage) step in with your hinder foote with your answere, but at no hand, neuer strike one blow with your Staffe; for hee that doth but lift vp his Staffe to strike, may easily be hit by the defender with a thrust, for in the same motion that the oppressour doth lift vp his staffe to strike

strike the defender, may with a speedie thrust hit him in the breast, and holde him off vpon the point of his staffe, if the Defender thrust out his staffe with his hinder hand, especially if their staues be both of one length, then hee that striketh, cannot endanger the other with a blow, for hee that striketh, holdeth both his hands vpon his staffe, vntill hee hath discharged his blow, whereby hee that thrusteth, hath two foot oddes of him in length that striketh, so that hee putteth out his staffe, to his most aduantage, as before said.

It is necessary, that hee which vseth the Staffe, should haue vse of both his hands alike, for thereby he may the better shift his staffe from hand to hand, whereby to lie crosse alwaies with your enemy, changing your hand and foote, as hee changeth for lying the one with the right hand and foote for-most, and the other with the left, then he that striketh first, can not choose but endanger the others hand, but if you cannot change your Staffe to lie crosse with your enemies Staffe: then for your defence of a blow, pitch the point of your Staffe into the ground, and let go your fore-hand, and when you haue discharged the blow with as much speed as you can, answer his blow with a thrust, for the greatest secret of all most chiefly to be remembred at this weapon, is, if your enemy doe but once offer to lift vp his hand to strike, then presently choppe in with a thrust at his breast, shoulder, or face, for so you may hit him as you will your selfe, so that you take your time of answering.

If your enemy strike with his staffe, hee holdeth him fast in both his hands when hee deliuereth his blow, by reason thereof, he which thrusteth and loo-  
seth



seth his fore-hand , when hee dischargeth his thrust or draweth in the fore-hand close vnto the hinder hand which holdeth the butte end of his Staffe , and so thrust him out withall , you may keepe the striker vpon the point of your Staffe , so that with his blow hee can not reach you , being equally matched in length, but must come vpon his owne death, or danger himselfe greatly.

*The high guard for the Staffe.*

**L**ooke vnder your Staffe with both your eies, with the point hanging slope-waies downe-wards by your side , bearing out your Staffe at the armes end , higher then your head alittle according to this Picture.



**Y**

**In**

In looking vnder your Staffe it will seeme to your enemy, that your defence is onelie for your head, then he wil thinke to hit you in the body with a thrust, for the bodie seemeth to lie very open vnto him, and if hee doe charge you with a thrust, carry the point of your Staffe ouer your bodie close by the ground towards the other side, and hauing defended the thrust, turne vp the point of your staffe presently towards your enemies breast, and charge him with a thrust: againe, if your enemy charge you with a blowe at your head, lift vp the point of your staffe & meete the blow halfe way, and withal, draw back your hands, for feare of endangering your fingers: hauing striken away his staffe, answer him againe with a thrust (as before said:) Now if your enemy charge you with a blow at your side, either pitch the point of your staffe into the ground to defend it, or else change into thy low gard and so crosse with him; if your enemy do strike a full blow at your head, you need not feare neither of your hands, but by striking with your staffe to meete his blow, you shall defend it vpon the middle, or neere the point of your staffe, although hee doe strike purposely at your hand, yet can he not touch your hands not any other part of your body: but vpon the defence of your body draw backe your hands. Now it beho- ueth you to be perfect, not only in this gard, but also in changing your staffe from hand to hand, according to your enemies lying: to do well you should change, as hee changeth, sometimes the point of your staffe should be hanging downe by the right side of your body, and sometimes by the left, according to your enemies lying, the best way to make your change, is to let your staffe slippe through your hands, like a Wea-  
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ners shuttle, for this is a more speedie change then to shift him after the common manner, and by a little practise you may grow perfect in it.

*The best guard for a darke night at Staffe.*

**I**F thou meet with thine enemy in the night, and he charge vpon thee, the best means for thy defence, is presently to chop vp into this high guard, except thy staffe be of a sufficient length, to keep him off, with charging the point vpon him, or else the third means is to trust to thy heeles, but if thou wilt trust to thine hands, then either keep him off with thy point, or else aboue all parts, chiefly defend thy head, which is not to be done, but only by this guard, except a man may see the blow before it do light; now thou must put thy hands a little further asunder, then thou dost for the day, that the blow may be defended, by taking him vpon thy staffe betwixt both thy hands: if it light at your head, as it is the fashion of most men to strike at the head (as I haue said before) rather then to any part of the bodie. Now hauing taken the blowe betwixt your hands, withall, run in and close with him, for if you stand off at the length in fight, anie time, being in the night, it cannot chuse but be verie dangerous, if you suffer him to discharge many blows, but either answer him with a thrust, or else close with him, and turne the butte end of your staffe into his breast or face, as you see occasion: now if it be in the day, or that you can see the blow before it light; if your enemy charge you with a blow at the side, meet his blow by carrying ouer to the other side, & pitch the point of your staffe in the ground, and loose your foremost hand for dangering of your fingers, but hold the hin-

der hand fast at the butte end of your staffe. But now, vpon this high guard you can not defend the false so wel, nor so sure, as when you lie on the low gard; for if your enemy doe proffer a thrust on the one side your staffe, and presently chop it home to the other side, he may endanger, nay, hee may hit a skilfull and cunning player, especially if you ouer-carrye your staffe in defence of the fained blow or thrust.

Wherefore, if you lie on the low guard with your staffe or pike, you shall defend a thrust with the point of your weapon long before it come neare you, & yet your point is readie to answer more speedily then it is when you lie on any other guard, but he which lieth with his point of the staffe or pike on the ground, hath verie little space to his bodie, no more then the length of his arme wherein hee holdeth his weapon: therefore he which suffreth a thrust to come so neare, it will quickelie come to the face or bodie, yet because most souldiers heretofore haue vsed this fashion of lying, and are not experienced in the low guard, according to the first Picture of the Staffe; but if in your practise you vse both, you shall find the benefit thereof the better; now if you frame your selfe into the high guard, your staffe must not be, in length, above eight foot at the most, but rather shorter, for else in defending your enemies thrust, a long staffe will hit in the ground, and by that means, your enemies thrust may endanger you: therefore, for this high gard, you must looke that your staffe be of that length, that you may carrie the point cleane from the ground in defending of a thrust, but for the low gard it is no matter of what length your staffe be.

Questions and answers betwixt the  
*Master and Scholler, concerning the Staffe.*

*The Scholler.*

**Y**OU haue'giuen me directions for two sorts of guards, which doe you commend best that I may repose my selfe vpon?

*The Master.*

I commend the low guard best, for that it serueth with the Quarter-staffe of seauen or eight foot, or for the Long-staffe of twelue foote, and for the Pike of eightene foote, for I haue made triall with men of good experience which haue lien in other guards according to their practise, as some at Quarter-staffe will lay their point vpon the ground ouerthware their bodie, holding the butte-end of their Staffe so low as their girdle-stead: he that thus lieth the best waie to hit him is to proffer, or faine a thrust at his face, and presently put it home below, for hee will carrie his Staffe vp to saue his face, but cannot put him downe againe before you haue hit him vnderneath as before said, but with quicknesse you may hit him in the face or breast, and neuer falsifie your thrust but put it in sodainely, turning the heele of hinder hand vpward withall: and if your enemy lie at Halfe-staffe, holding him in the middest, his hands that so lieth, are in danger of euerie blow that cometh, but the best way to hit him that so lieth without danger to thy selfe, is with a false thrust, and that is to

proffer it on the one side of his staffe, and to put it home on the other, according to the direction of the false play that followeth: but first let me make an end of that which I haue begunne, and so wee will proceed, some will lie with the Long-staffe, or Pike with the point on the ground, and the butte end so high as his head or higher; indeed this hath beene and is common fight with the Pike amongst the souldiers, and the defence of this guard either for blow or thrust, is to swerue his vper-hand, this way, or that way, according as he seeth the danger of the oppressors assault, and then presently launch out the Staffe or Pike by lifting them vp, vpon the out-side of their foote or else by gathering him vp on their left arme, and so launch him out as aforelaide: he that vseth this guard, must be strong, and verie actiue, and nimble, but whatsoeuer hee be, high or low, weake or strong, the low guard is best.

*The Scholler.*

If the low guard be so strong for my defence what need haue I to learne any other?

*The Master.*

It is true, a man can be but sure if hee practise all the daies of his life, but it is not amisse for thee to know more then euer thou shalt haue occasion to vse; for hauing the perfect vse of the low and high guard, you may close with any Staffe man, if you thinke you can make your partie good with him when you haue closed.

*The Scholler.*

I pray you direct me the best manner of closing.

*The Master.*

When you encounter with any man that hath a Staffe,



Staffe, a Welch-hooke, or a Halbert, and your selfe being armed with any one of these weapons, present a thrust to the face of your enemy, and withall, follow it in with your hind-most foote also; and as you inroach in, clap vp your Staffe into the high guard, and you shall carrie your enemies point ouer your head by that meanes, but you must not be slack in following of it in, for hee will beare the point of his weapon so high to defend his face, that he cannot recouer his Staffe by no meanes to endanger you, and when you haue made your close, you may turne the But-end of your Staffe in his face if you list, or you may trip vp his heeles, if you be cunning in wrestling: but if hee haue any short weapons about him, then I wish you to take him about the middle and vn-arme him of it, or else to hold him fast that hee hurt you not, but if you bee armed with a Bill or a Hooke, then in your halfe-close you may fall away turning the edge of your Bill or Hooke towards his legge, and so by a drawing blow rake him ouer the shins, and keeping vp the But-end of the Staffe for the defence of your owne head, and so you may fall out of his distance, and recouer your guard before he can any way endanger you.

If your enemy close with you after this manner, and doe offer the But-end of his Staffe vnto your face or breast, then fall backe with your fore foote, and make a quicke change, and you shall haue him at great aduantage, both for defence and likewise to turne in the But-end of your Staffe vnto his face or breast, and if you list this is a sure defence for such an assault, belecue it, for I know it, he that is perfect in the low guard, may with a Staffe encounter against  
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the Welch-hooke, Holbert, Partizan, or Gleave, and I hold that a Staffe with a Pike to haue oddes against any such long weapon, being equally matched in length, for oddes in length with any weapon is verie much aduantage, where I wish if any doe appoint the field with any of these aforefaid weapons, it is not amisse for the one of them to condition to bring a hatchet or some other edged toole into the field to cut the longest staffe, except you match them before hand.

*The Scholler.*

I pray you let me here your reason, for many thinke that the hooke or any edged weapon hath great ods against the Staffe.

*The Master.*

Indeed without cunning and skill, the Welch-hooke, and these other weapons are more fearefull vnto the ignorant, but hee that is cunning in the false play and slippes, belonging vnto the Staffe may with a false thrust or with slipping his blow endanger any other, being weaponed with any other of these weapons aforelaid. For if you falsifie your thrust according to my direction in the false play, that is, to proffer your thrust on the one side, and then to put home the second determined thrust vnto the other side of his weapon, and then if your enemy haue a Hooke, Halbert, or Bill in defending the false, the head of his weapon will so ouer-carrie him by the reason of the weight, that hee cannot command him nimble backe againe, whereby to defend the false, if your enemy bee armed with a Hooke, Holbert or Partizan or Gleave, if hee charge you with a blow, then slippe his blow, either by plucking  
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in of your Staffe, keeping of the point vpright vntill his blow be past, and then you may answere him againe, either with blow or thrust; for by slipping a blow, the weight of the head of any of these aforesaid weapons will goe with such a swing that it will turne his body in a manner round, I meane beyond the compasse of defence.

Again if you thinke that your face is out of his reach, he which chargeth you with a blow with any of these aforesaid weapons, you may let fall the point of your staffe, so that his blow may passe cleere ouer your staffe, and so choppe home a thrust withall vnder your enemies weapons, and then recouer the point of your Staffe vp hastily againe.

*The Scholler.*

What if I bee armed with any of these weapons aforesaid, what guard will your direct mee to frame my selfe vnto?

*The Master.*

I still commend the low guard for any long weapon, whether it be Staffe, Pike, Hooke, Halbert, Partizan or Gleaue, my reason is the point being so high as your head, and the But-end so low as your thigh, then is your weapon more readier to defend either blow or thrust, if you bee charged neuer so sodainely, whereas if your point hang downe-wards toward the ground, you can neuer lift him vp quick againe to defend your thrust, but a blow may be defended easily, for that a blow commeth more leasurably, for why it is fetcht with a greater compasse, and a thrust goeth with farre more celerity then a blow, being put in cunningly, but of these weapons shall follow more at large in the second booke.

Z

Now

Now if thy enimie haue oddes in length in his Staffe, then let thy enimie make the first assault, and vpon defence of his assault steppe forth with thy hindermost foote, and so thou shalt gaine sixe foote at the least in reach, but if your staues bee both of one length, then vpon a charge or answere, increase in onely with thy fore foote, and stand fast with thy hinder foote, onely to plucke backe thy body againe, and if thou make the first assault, and thy enimie defend it, and so hee make a sodaine answere, then it wilbe hard to recouer vp thy staffe into his place, to defend it according to the low guard: but for a sodaine shift the best defence is bearing your vpper-hand ouer your body, and letting your point fall to the ground, according to the olde common order of the fight with the Pike, at single hand, I meane, hand to hand, or I may say, man to man.

*The Scholler.*

I pray you how would you direct mee to frame my guard with my staffe, if I were to encounter with my enemy, being armed with Sword and Dagger, or Rapier and Dagger?

*The Master.*

I hold the low guard best, charging thy point directly to the enemies breast, and alwaies haue a speciall regard, that thou possesse not a blow, for so hee may defend it double on the Back-sword and Dagger, and runne in vnder the Staffe, likewise if thou proffer a thrust, let not thy Staffe loose out of thy fore-hand, but hold him fast, that thereby thou maist hee the more readie to charge him againe, and againe if hee encroach in vpon thee, for if thou let

goe

goe one hand, then may thy enemy very well defend the thrust of a staffe, according as I haue directed in the description of the Rapier and Dagger, concerning the staffe, for with that one defence, being experienced in it, thou maist endanger any Staffe-man, that is not wary, and withall, well experienced in both these weapons, so that thou take thy opportunity vpon his assault, I mean in answering him quick, so soone as you haue defended his assault, whether it be blow or thrust.

Now if thy enemy doe strike at the point of thy Staffe, thinking to cut him off, then, as you see his blow comming, let fall the point of your Staffe, and presently chop home a thrust, for in so doing his blow will flie ouer your Staffe, as by your practise you may be perfect in this flippe, for so wee call it. I haue knowen a man with a Sword and Dagger hath cut off the end of a Pike-staffe, but I hold him an ignorant and an vnskillfull man, that hath held the staffe, for though I hold, that a man skillfull at the Sword and Dagger may encounter against a reasonable Staffe-man, the same opinion I hold stil, and my reasons thou shalt heare; if extreame need require, and vpon a necessity, then the best meanes is to be vsed wherfore to be furnished with the best means before hand at the time of neede, it may greatly stead thee, for euery common man hath not knowledge of the best rule, except hee haue learned it and practised it by those which could shew it, for it commeth not by nature to none, yet euery ignorant dunce, when hee is perswaded to goe learne skill, will say, when I am put to my shift I will doe the best I can: so a man may, and yet without skill bee killed, although



hee doe his best , my opinion further of this followeth.

Now the best guard with a Sword and Dagger, or Rapier and Dagger against a Staffe , is this , put your Dagger on the in-side of your Rapier or Sword , and ioyned them both together , making your crosse with them within a foote or thereabouts of the hilt of your Rapier or Sword , and looking cleere with both your eyes vnder them , or betwixt both your weapons , and then if your enemy charge you with a blow at your head with his Staffe , beare them both double against the blow , and hauing defended it , turne your point and turne your knuckles inward of your right-hand , and so to goe in amaine vpon him.

But if hee charge you with a thrust , then presently let fall the point of your Rapier downe-ward , and force him downe the more stronger , and more quicker with your Dagger , for to that end I doe appoint you to put your Dagger in the in-side of your Rapier or Sword . Loe in this manner you may defende either blow or thrust of the Staffe , yet I must needes confesse , there is great oddes in the Staffe , if the Staffe-man bee verie skilfull , but otherwise the Rapier and Dagger hath the oddes being furnished with skill.

*False play to be vsed at the Staffe.*

**I**F you both lie in the low gard , according vnto my former direction , then proffer or faine a thrust vnto your enemies face to the fairest side of the staffe , which to your seeming lieth most open or vngarded , but



but the presently in the same motion let fall the point of your staffe so low as his girdle-sted, so that you may passe cleare vnder the But end of his staffe; for if with any part of his staffe he touch or intangle your staffe, then you can not put in your false so directly as you should, or as you may, if you passe cleare with your first offer, then may you bring vp your point on the other side of his staffe, and thrusting it home, you may hit him in the shoulder or face, as you will your selfe, yea although he be verie skilfull or cunning, so that you haue the true stroke of it: as to make it plainer, then in offering your false, doe but fall the point of your staffe, striking it as it were a blowe, but let it fall two foote wide of that side, which lieth open, and then bring it vp againe on the other side, and put it in with a thrust, for hee will carrie his staffe to defend your false, and so by that meanes open the side which lieth well guarded, and alwaies marke which part of your enemies bodie lieth open or most discouered vnto you, there proffer you your fained thrust, first to the fairest, but hit him with your second or determined thrust to the contrarie side, and if you faine your thrust to the right side, then thrust it home to the left, and if you faine your thrust to the left side, then put it home to the right, and you may hit him in the breast, shoulder, or face, whether you list your selfe, so that you proffer your fained thrust three foote wide of his bodie, for if in offering your fained thrust, he hit your staffe, it will so intangle your point, that you cannot recover him to hit him with your determined thrust, for before you can cleare your point, he will be in his guard of defence againe.

*The defence of this false thrust.*

**T**His thrust is to be defended two waies, the first is to beare him against your enemies proffer, but haue a care that you doe not ouer-bear him, so that if he mock you with his fained thrust on the one side, you must quicklie bring your staffe backe againe into his place, to meet him when he commeth on the other side of his staffe, and so to defend it, keeping your point vpriight: now the second defence is to beare your staffe ouer your bodie against his proffer, as you doe against euerie ordinarie thrust; for you must suppose that euerie thrust will come home, for the defender doth not know if his enemy doe proffer a thrust, whether it will come home or not: therefore (as I said) you must beare your staffe against euerie thrust, but you should beare your staffe but a foote out of his place, whether it be against blow or thrust: for if you ouer-carrie him, you can not recouer him to defend neither blowe nor thrust, if it be falsified vpon you. Now if your enemy doe falsifie vpon his first proffer, carrie your staffe ouer your bodie, keeping the point vpriight against his first proffer: now vpon your offer of defence, at the first you see that you make no seisure vpon his staffe, then presently you may perceiue he doth but dallie with you, onlie to deceiue you with false play, but then your proffer of defence, both for the true and false play, must be all done with one motion; for if you see that with the first proffer aboue he shorten his thrust, without putting it home, then turne downe the point of your staffe towards the ground, and meete him below, and

so

so strike it away, but be sure that you defend alwaies before hand, for to strike it backward is no sure defence.

Yet to make this fore-hand defence plainer, why then it is thus meant, if your right hand be placed foremost in holding your staffe, then you must defend both the true play, and the false towards your left hand, but you must not defend the first proffer forward, and the next, which may bee the false thrust, backward, but both must be defended towards your left side: and so likewise, if your left hand be foremost, then frame your defence towards your right side, as before said.

Now if you cannot change hands, as (it may be) your enemy can, then keepe your guard vpon that hand which you can best vse, and you shall finde that hee hath very little oddes after you haue practised it a while; for you may offer or defend anie false play so well as if you lay crosse handed one to the other.

*A false blowe.*

**N**OW, if you would hit your enemy on the head with a blow, you must proffer a false blow at the head, as if you would strike him downe at the first; but when it is come halfe way, stay your hand, or checke your blow before it meet with his staffe, for he will beare his staffe against your blow, thinking to defend it strongly, before it come to endanger him: but the checking of the first blow will be an occasion, that he wil ouer-carry his staffe beyond the compasse of true defence, so that you may presently come with a second blowe, and strike it home over the point of  
his

his staffe, so by this determined blow, you may hit him on the head or face.

*A Slippe at a Staffe.*

**I**F your enemy charge you with a blow, you lying in your guard according to the Picture, euen as you see the blow comming, plucke in your staffe, and withall, withdraw your head and bodie a little backe, bearing your staffe, during the time while the blowe hath his passage, close vpright by that side of your face which your enemy chargeth you at, to defend that side; if the blow doe reach home, but if it doe passe short, and goe cleare of you, without touching your staffe, then will his staffe flie away with the greater swinge, so that it will passe beyond compasse of true defence; but if it be a Welch-hooke, or any other head weapon, then will the slipping of his blow be a more occasion of the ouer-carrying his blow, by carrying his body round, so that his blow being past, you may presently charge him with a blow at the head, or thrust him in the backe, so that it be done quicke before your enemy doe recouer his weapons into their place of defence.

*Another falsifie.*

**Y**OU may profer a downe-right blow at your enemies head, fetching him with a great compasse, so that it may seeme to your enemy, that you meane to strike him downe, but as your blow is comming, draw backe your hand and change your blow into a thrust, and chopping home to his breast or any other part of his body, that you will your selfe, for he will beare his Staffe to defend the blow, I meane if

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if hee be not very skilfull and cunning, the which if he doe, hee can but defend himselfe, the which to doe he must be very wary when he beareth his staffe to defend then the blow, so that he doe not ouer-carrie his staffe, and yet to beare him a little and then to checke his Staffe, and be readie to turne downe the point to defend the thrust, but he that is skilfull will, or should chop out a thrust if his enimie doe proffer a blow, and the thrust should be put out with one hand, and to loose the other, I meane with that hand which holdeth the But-end of the Staffe, for so thou shalt keepe him out at the point of thy Staffe; for then the blow cannot endanger thee, except there be great oddes in the length of your staues, for commonly he that striketh, holdeth both his hands vpon his Staffe when hee deliuereth his blow, whereby there is three foote oddes in reach betwixt the striker and he which thrusteth.

*Another very deceiuing false thrust  
at the Staffe.*

**T**Hy enimie lying in guard, proffer a fained thrust towards his foote, and then presently raise thy point againe, and thrust if home to his face or brest, for if hee turne downe the point of his Staffe to saue the false thrust below; then if he were neuer so cunning, or neuer so strong, yet can he not put vp his Staffe time enough to defend his vpper part; and therefore not to turne downe the point, if thy enemy doe proffer a thrust below is the more surest, but if a thrust bee made below or about the knee, plucke vp thy legge, and either thrust with him,

**Aa**

or

or keepe vp thy Staffe to defend thy vpper part, which are the killing places, rather then to turne him downe to defend thy legge or foote, wherein is not so great danger of death as the body being hit, but at the Staffe all parts may be defended with skill.

*The guard for the Sword and Dagger, the which for surenesse wee will call the Castle-guard.*



**I** Might heare in this place discribe many wardes or guards, at the Sword and Dagger, as the Lookeward, the Iron-ward, the Hanging-ward, the Crosse-ward, three high guards, the Low-guard, the Broad-ward. I will a little touch them all, or the most part of them with words, although not with pictures, but



but in the next Impression more at large, both with words and with pictures.

But now chiefly at this time I will proceed only with this Castle-guard, or Back-sword-guard according to the picture, for with the skil of this one guard thou maist safely encounter against any man, which vseth any other of the foresaid guards, for this one guard being perfectly learned thou maist defend thy selfe with great aduantage.

Now for the manner of the framing thy selfe into this guard, thou must beare out the hilt of thy sword a foote from thy body, so low as the pocket of thy hose, and right out from thy thigh, and thy Dagger out right at the armes end, and thy Dagger hilt euen with thy left cheeke, but barely looking ouer the vpper part of thy Dagger hilt, and the points of both thy Sword and Dagger a little bowing each to the other, and close aboue, but open thy hilts so broad below as thou maist see cleerely thy enemie betwixt them both, as at Rapier and Dagger before is described, for both at Rapier and Dagger, the guards are both verie neere alike, but onely for the carriage of thy Rapier hand and foote, a little neerer thy body then at Sword and Dagger, the reasons are, and shall be made plaine vnto thee, as in reading thou shalt finde it, for both at Rapier and Dagger, and at Sword and Dagger, a man should bee prepared as well at the one, as the other to defend a thrust in fight so well as a blow, and except the Rapier point be borne some thing high, he is not ready to defend a blow, as by this guard thus being placed, as aforesaid, thy Sword onely being borne out against the blow, will defend all thy right-side, both thy head,

and downe to thy knee, without moouing him, but if thy enemy doe charge thee with a blow at thy left-side, whether he strike to thy head or side, then beare both thy Sword and thy Dagger over thy body, towards thy left-side, and withall I doe aduise thee to haue a care to carry both the hilt and point leuell, euen as thou liest in thy guard, for if thou carry thy Hilt of thy Sword over thy body towards thy left-side, and turne thy point Back-ward, then both at Sword and Dagger, and at Rapier and Dagger, thy head is endangered, for then thou hast but a single ward for thy head, I meane thy Dagger onely, and that is no sure defence for the head, if thy practise were neuer so much, but both being borne together, according vnto the Backe-sword rule, thou shalt defend both thy head and body downe to thy knee very strongly, and thy legges must saue himselfe by a quick pulling vp of thy foote.

Thy weapons  
thus placed  
thou shalt find  
thy body guarded  
like a prisoner  
betwixt  
two keepers,  
thy sword to  
guard thy  
right-side, and  
thy dagger the  
left.

Likewise at Sword and Dagger, you may set your feete a foote distance one right before the other, the other which I doe not allow of at Rapier and Dagger, also you must keepe the point of your Sword on the in-side of your Dagger, and halfe a foote higher then your Dagger point, especially if you play at the blunt, but in fight as at Rapier and Dagger, then you must so exercise your foote, that you may pluck him vp nimble against euery blow that commeth, otherwise if you doe keepe them so neare as my direction is at Rapier and Dagger, then is your foote sure without plucking of him vp; beare your head vp right, bowing rather to the right-sholder, then to the left, but not forward at any weapon, but your body bowing forward, and keepe your points close together, and

and your Sword point on the inside of your Dagger point (as before-saide) and the hilt of your Dagger from your left cheeke, right at the armes end, without bowing of your elbow ioynt, and your Dagger point sloping, or bowing towards your right side, looking with both your eies betwixt your weapons, looke not ouer your weapons with neither of your eies at anie hand; your weapons placed, and your bodie settled (as aforesaide) then shall you finde no part of your bodie discouered or vnguarded, but onlie your left side from the Dagner arme downewards, and that you must haue a care vnto, and defend it in this manner.

If your enemy charge you with a blow, defend your selfe, by bearing the edge of your Sword against it, and a little beare your Dagger against the blow also, onely to giue allowance for the yeelding of your Dagger, if the blow should chaunce to light at your head, for your guard simply of himselfe doth defend but a weake blow; if you stand stocke still at your gard as a wrist blow a droppe or a mite, which commeth with small force, though they come with more speed then any other blow, your guard will defend without moouing your weapons. Now other blowes which shall come with greater force, consume more time, and doe fetch a greater compasse, insomuch as their force is greater, you shal perceiue them the plainer, to which side the blow will come, and if to the right side, then swarue both wepons against the blow, and if to the left side, do likewise (keeping vp the point of your sword, for that will defend from the head downe to the knee, and the knee and leg which you stand formost vpon, you must defend by plucking

them vp, and your sword will defend the hindmost legge, if the blow should chance to reach so farre, by taking it neere the hilt, vpon the edge of your backesword, as aforesaid, for if you put downe the point of your sword to saue your legge, then you leaue your head and your face vnguarded; for when you see your enemy charge you with a blow, there is no rule to be shewen to know where the blow will light, vntill it doe light: but this assure your selfe, the blow must haue a lighting place; for when the sword is vp, where he will fall there is no rule to be shewen, for when the blow is charged, it commeth so swift and lighteth where the striker thinketh good; wherefore arme your selfe to defend euerie place, whether it commeth aboue or below; for if you turne downe the point of your sword before-hand, thinking the blow will light at your legge, for so you must doe if you will defend him with your sword, otherwise you cannot be downe quicke enough, for the blow will passe more speedier then the turning of a hand; wherefore I wish you to saue your legge by plucking of him vp, and open not your head, in hope to saue your legge, and so saue neither of them, for the head is the principall place that your enemy will strike at; therefore keepe your points alwaies vpright, and in their place, according to my direction following the first Picture; and likewise as heere I haue described it, for it is not enough to know the place of your weapons, but alwaies to continue them in their place, except it be at the verie instant time of your defence, and offence: but if you make play to offend your enemy, recouer your weapons into your guard speedily againe whether you hit or misse: Now in striking thy blow, let not thy  
Sword

Sword swing vnder thine arme by over-striking thy blowe, but winde him vp presently into his place againe; alwaies keepe the points close, and defend the blow double: for so doing the point of your sword will be a great strengthening vnto your Dagger, for hee that doth trust to defend a blow with the Dagger onely, may be deceiued, if his cunning were neuer so good; for if the blow should light nere the point of your Dagger, by reason of the sharpenesse and weakenesse of the Dagger, it may glide ouer, and hit him that is skilfull, if his cunning were neuer so good: likewise, the blow may hit him vnder the Dagger-arme, which trusteth to the Dagger, except hee vse the defence of his backe-sword, for which both together a weake man, yea, a boy may defend a strong man with both, for no man is able to charge a blow with one hand, if his force were neuer so great, but one that is verie weake and skilful of the Back-sword, may defend himselfe double (as aforesaid) for he that chargeth with one hand, a verie wretch is able to defend with both, hauing skill and practise in all fashions, for when one cannot hit thee, yet another whose fashion thou art vnacquainted with may hit thee, but being experienced in many weapons, and in many guards, and practising with many men, then if thou haue an occasion to answer any one which thou neuer sawest before, thou wilt presently call to minde, that hee can but strike and thrust: therefore being prepared before hand, then so soone as thou seest his gard and charge, thou knowest thy defence.

Now (as I haue said before) you must be carefull in your defence, and so soone as you come within the reach of your enemy, prepare your selfe into  
your

your guard, to defend euerie part both from blowe and thrust, defending the blow with the Backe-sword so low as your knee, and the point helping to strengthen the point of your Dagger: then if your enemy charge you with a blowe, you must not prepare to strike with him; for so you may be hurt, and then say afterward, I thought hee would haue stricke at mine head, and so neuer reckon vpon your side nor your legge, or if you should thinke he would haue stricke at your legge, and so neuer regard your head: But I say you must not deale vpon thought, but vpon a sure guard, and it is not sufficient, to know your guard of defence, but you must keepe him, for if your enemy haue once hit you for want of keeping your guard, it will be too late for you to remember your defence afterwards, therefore looke to it afore the blow doth light; or if you fight at Rapier and Dagger, you must looke for both blow and thrust, for your enemy may strike with his Rapier, and hit you if you do not looke for a blow, and when you are hit, it is too late to say, I thought he would not haue stricke with his Rapier. Againe, at Sword and Dagger, it may be your enemy will thrust, and you must not say, I thought he would not thrust, for euerie one will, in a quarrell, do what his affection leadeth him best vnto, except he alter his affection by practise.

*Heere followeth the chiefeſt blowes at Sword and Dagger, and the maner how to perſorme them.*

**N**OW for thy best aduantage, in as plaine maner, as by words I can expresse them, amongst many other blowes, wee will heere obserue these three:



three: the first, a wrist blow, a halfe blow, and a quarter blow; euerie one of these must bee vsed in their time and place (as this) sometimes with a wrist blow, thou maiest speed thine enemy when thou canst not hit him with a halfe blow, nor with a quarter blow, because there is in the deliuering of either of the two last blowes, more time spent, for euerie blow exceedeth each other, in force, and in quickenesse; this wrist blow will hit thine enemy either head or face, if his points lie any thing open, or on either side of his head, if he doe looke ouer either of his weapons: for although he doe see it comming nener so plaine, yet he cannot preuent it, if hee had *Argus* eyes, if his weapons be but an inch too lowe, but if your enemy doe lie more open, then you may charge him with a halfe blow, or a full quarter blow. but the quarter blow serueth best for the legge. If thine enemy doe incroach or gather in vpon thee, then strike downe to his legge and beare vp thy Dagger ouer thy head, with the point something sloping towards thy right shoulder, for so thy Dagger will saue thy head, and the point of thy Sword will hit him on the legge in his owne comming, and the vpper part of thy Sword will defend thine owne legge, if he charge thee in thine owne assault; but so soone as thou hast stricken thy blow, recouer thy guard hastily againe: the quarter blowe doth fetch a compasse about the head, that although hee come strong, it is not so quick as many other: now there is a washing blowe, which the vnskilfull do vse much, and with that blow thou maiest hit thy enemy vnder the Dagger arme, if he be not skilfull, with his Back-sword, for there is no other defence for it, but the Backe-sword onslie.

Bb

Then

Then there is a whirling blow, & that is after thou hast west thy Sword, or flourished him ouer thine head twice or thrice, thou mayest deliuer thy blowe, either to the head or legge, or to what place thou seest most for thine aduantage, for it is such an vncertaine blow, that he must be a good player that defendeth it.

Also there is a backe blow which is to be made two waies, the one is a plaine Dunstable way, that is, to fetch thy sword frō off thy left shoulder, & so to strike it to the right side of thy enemies head, or to the outside of his right leg, but the cunningest way is to bow thy Sword-elbow ioynt, & with thy knuckles vpward, and thy Sword hilt so high as your eare, and then by turning of your sword hand wrist, bend, or proffer the point of thy Sword with a blow towards your enemies Dagger eare, but presently turning your wrist, bringing the middest of your Sword close ouer the crowne of thy head, and with a compasse blow, striking it home to his Sword eare, or to the outside of his legge: I cannot with wordes make this blowe so plaine as I would, for I would gladly the ignorant should vnderstand it, for of all the blowes of true play, this is the best, for you may likewise faine it vnto the out-side of your enemies head, and strike it home to the other, or vnto his side.

*Here followeth the false play at Sword and Dagger.*

**I**F your enemy be in this guard, as I haue heere described by false play, you may cause him to open his guard, but if he lie vpon any other guard, then you neede not to falsifie, for you may hit him with true play.

If

If you would hit your enemy on the right side of the head, then strike a blow to his foote, but strike it somewhat short, then presently bring it with a back blow to his right eare, the which will be vnguarded, by reason of the carrying his Sword to saue his left side, if hee be not the better grounded with experience.

And if you would hit him on the side of his head, then thrust a full thrust at his bellie, turning your knuckles inward, and hee will put downe his Dagger to defend it, but then, so soone as you haue offered your thrust, presently bring vp your Sword close vp by the out-side of his Dagger elbow, and with a wrist blow strike him on the eare or head, keeping your knuckles inward, till the blow be deliuered: with this blow you may hit a good Player, but indeed it is not a very strong blow. Now to hit thy enemy in the foote, is to thrust two or three thrusts short at his face, and then fall it downe to the legge or the foote with a blow, for the feare of the daungering of his face with a thrust will make him forget his legge.

Another way is to strike a backe blow strongly to his Sword eare, and presently fall it downe to his foote, for hee seeing it come to his head, not one in twentie, but will wincke, and before he open his eyes againe, you may hit him vpon his foote or legge.

But the chiefeest blow of all for the legge, is to lift vp the heele of your Sword hand higher then your head, and tip in the point ouer your enemies Sword, as though you would hit him in the right eye, but presently bring downe your Sword with a full blowe to the in-side of his legge, for this blow in offering a-

loft, will sure make him winke and deceiue a skilfull man, and if in the lifting vp of your Sword, you say, Beware your foote, it will serue to him, that you go about to hit him on the head, so hee will lift vp his weapons to saue the head, but this blow being cunningly deliuered commeth downe to the legge, with such celeritie and violence, that hee cannot preuent it, except hee hath beene vsed to it with much practise, but it seldome misleth if it be cunningly deliuered.

Yet there is another deceitfull blow for the legge or foote, that is, to strike a backe blow to the sword care (as before-saide) stepping out your foote with your blow alittle, and see that your blow reach but to his Sword, it is enough, but hastily plucke backe your foote, and your Sword in their place, and provide to charge him with a blow to the foote, as hee cometh in to answer your first blow: now in striking at his legge, be alittle before hand; for as he maketh a motion of lifting vp his Sword to charge you, step in with the same motion, and in falling your point to his legge, you saue your owne legge, if he do strike at your legge, then the Dagger must at such a time, defend your head single, which you may very well doe, if you beare him alittle the higher, but withall, turne the Dagger point downe towards the right shoulder.

Also, you may deceiue some, with casting your eies downe, and looking to his foote, and presently strike it home to his head, for with your eie you may deceiue him which is not perfect in this deceit.

*Certaine*

*Certaine reasons why thou maist not strike with  
thy weapon in fight.*

**T**He first danger is described following the first picture in this booke, and in this manner, the defender is to take the blow double, or on the Back-sword onely, and then presently to charge him againe with the point, with the which the defender may hit the striker in the face, brest or thigh, as he will himselfe, the like may be done with a staffe, first, defend the blow, and answere quick with a thrust.

The next danger, if it be with a sword, is this, thou maist breake or bow him, or he may slip out of the hilt, any of these dangers may happen at the very first blow that thou striketh, and if it be a staffe it may likewise be broken, or the pike may flie out, and then thou art not assured whether thy enemy vpon such an occasion will take the aduantage vpon thee, if such a chance doe fall out, therefore beware of striking.

An other hazard by striking is vnto the striker, if his enemie the defender doe but slippe his blow by a little with-drawing of his body backe, euen as hee seeth the blow come, and so I say by a little with-drawing the body, and also by plucking in his weapons, he that striketh the blow will ouer-sway his body beyond the compasse of true defence, and so the blow being past, charge him presently with a thrust, for he that striketh his blow will carrie his body in a manner round, so that the blow be not defended, but let slippe, as aforesaid, and then you may hit him in the backe, either with a blow or thrust, if you take



your opportunity in making a quicke answer, as more at large of this slight I haue shewen in the false play at each weapon, also diuers reasons heere and there in this booke, concerning the disaduantage of a blow.

*The Authors opinion concerning the oddes betwixt  
a left-handed man, and a right-handed  
man.*

**A** Left-handed man being skilfull hath oddes against a right-handed man being skilfull likewise, one reason is a left-hand man is alwaies vsed vnto a right-handed man, but a right-handed man doth seldome meete with a left-handed man, for in Schooles or such places, where play is, a man may play with forty men, and not meete with too left-handed men, except it be a great chance, another reason is, when a right-handed man doth offer or make play, first vnto the left-handed man, then doth he endanger the right-side of his head, although hee doe beare his Dagger to the right-side, yet it doth not defend so strong, nor so sure, as it doth the left, yet vnto one that is well instructed with the true skill of the Back-sword, and other rules which belongeth for the best aduantage against a left-hand, it wilbe the lesse dangerous or troublesome vnto such a one, for he wil presently cal himselfe to minde, when he seeth that he is to encounter against a left-handed man, he will frame himselfe presently to the best guard of defence for that purpose which is the Back-sword, for that is the chiefe weapon to be grounded in, not onely a left-hand, but many other weapons haue the  
true



true stroke of that weapon, and are guided onely by the rules of the Back-sword, euen as the helme guides the ship, now if thou offer play, first to the left-handed man, thou must be carefull and heedy to recover vp thy Back sword againe, presently into his place so quicke as thou canst, or else turne ouer your Dagger to the right-eare, these very rules likewise must a left-handed man obserue to encounter against a right-handed man, yet furthermore I haue knowne some right-handed men, that were very skilfull, and verie ready if it had beene to encounter against a right-handed man, but by no meanes would not deale with a left-handed man, and this was for want of a good teacher: for the teacher should instruct euery one which they doe teach by playing with his left-hand with them, for it is an easie matter to haue the oddes of both the hands a like with little practise, and then a man may vse which he will, as if a right-handed man were to encounter against a left, and can vse both hands alike, then if he play with his left-hand against one that is left-handed by nature, it will seeme more crosse, and more dangerous vnto him then a left-handed man vnto a right, the reason is that two left-handed men seldome meete together, now to end with this one speech according to the vulgar sort, that is an ignorant and a simple man of skill by great and often toyling and moyling of his body, in practising naturall play, I meane onely that which commeth into his head, and being right-handed meeteth with another right-handed man that is very skilfull, and hath very artificiall play, and yet the vn-skilfull hath plied so fast and let his blowes fall so thicke, that the skilfull man had enough a doe to defend

send himselfe, so that the vnskilfull hath made such good shift, and defended himselfe contrary vnto any mans expectation, that was so experience and saw it, but there is not one of the common streete plaiers in a hundred that can doe the like as I haue said before, but not one in fise hundred of them, that can vpon the point of a weapon hurt or wrong one that is skilfull or cunning, for many of these streete players are so vsed to bangs, that they care not for a blow with a blunt cudgell, but most of them are fearefull to deale against a sharp weapon, but now to conclude this, with that which toucheth this Chapter, concerning these streete players, which haue so well shifted with a cunning player right-handed, the same I say meeting with a left-handed man was not able to defend in a manner one blow in twenty, except it were in falling backe from him, and the cunningest man that is, cannot hit the vnskilfullest man that is, if the vnskilfull man do continually keepe him out of his reach or distance, for he which hath courage without skill, although well prepared, yet wants his armes to fight, but of this it is sufficiently spoken of in the Treatise, in the former part of the Booke.

*A brieft of my principall points which I would  
haue thee keepe in continuall re-  
membrance.*

**N**OW to summe vp all the chiefeft lessons into one summe, and for order sake wee will make foure deuisions of them.

The first is to remember to frame thy selfe into thy guard, before thou come within thy enemies distance

distance, and so to approach in guarded.

Secondly, remember if thy enemy charge thee with a blow, at what weapon soeuer, yet answere him with a thrust presently, after you haue borne the blow double, according to my direction, following the first picture, but if thy enemy charge thee with a thrust, then answere him with a thrust at the nearest place, which lieth most vnguarded, whether it be his knee or in his making play, your answere may be to his right arme, shoulder or face, all which you shall finde vnguarded in time of his profer, now if he haue a close hilted dagger, yet with a false thrust thou maist hit him in the Dagger-arme if he fight not very warily, or else in the Dagger-hand if hee haue not a close hilted dagger.

Be constant  
and steady in  
a good guard  
bee slow to  
make play ex-  
cept thy ene-  
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thee.

Thirdly, let not fury ouer-come thy wits, for in a made fury skill is forgotten, for he which is in drinke or ouer hasty, such a one in his anger doth neither thinke vpon the end of killing, nor feare to bee killed.

Now the fourth and last which should haue beene the first, is to remember to keepe a true distance, and if thy enemy doe gather and incroach in vpon thee, charge him with a thrust, although thou put it not home, for a thrust will feare him, and he which is in his right wits will be loath to come within the reach, or danger of thy weapon, but if thou suffer thy enemy to come within thy distance, then if thou haddest all the guards in the world, and yet stand still without making play, hee will hit thee in spight of thy teeth, wherefore be doing with him betimes; and he will retreat and fall away from thee for his owne ease, Loe, this I wrote, because I would not haue thee in

an error when thou shouldest haue occasion to vse thy weapon, as the best defence, for a shot is to stand out of the reach of him, euen so the best defence of thy bodie from hurts and skars is to be proceeded before hand with skill and cunning, and to remember it when thou hast occasion to vse it, but if thou want skill, then keepe out of thy enemies reach; now if thou canst not remember these foure chiefe points before said, yet beare in minde these two, the first is to defend the blow double, keeping both the points vpward, and secondly, remember that if thy enemy doe gather in vpon thee, thrust to his knee, or whether hee doe gather in or no, yet thrust to his knee or thigh, but at any hand steps not so farre forth with your thrust whereby to endanger your face, but if you doe steppe so farre forth as you can, alwaies haue a care to defend with your dagger, but if your enemy do set forth one foote aboue halfe a foote distance from the other, then may you hit him in the thigh or knee, and hee cannot reach you so that you doe not aduenture further with your thrust, then where his knee did stand when you doe offer, for it may be hee will plucke him away, thereby to saue him, but that is no defence for a thrust if it be put in quicke: a man may defend the legge from a blow, by drawing him back, but not from a thrust, but to keepe thy feete in the right place according to my direction following the first picture, and then you are defended, and ready to offend also.

*The Authors opinion concerning the Short  
Sword and Dagger.*

**I**N describing of this weapon I shall account the time ill spent, yet because Short swords are in vse and worne of many that would leaue them off if that they knew what an idle weapon it were, I meane to encounter against a long Sword and Dagger, or a long Rapier and Dagger, so small is their Iudgement, but onely this, many of them will say it is a better weapon then any of the two foresaid weapons are, but in my minde they may aswell say that chalke is cheefe because they are both white, for I haue had much triall and great practise with the short sword, yet could I neuer find, nor neuer wilbe perswaded but that a Rapier foure foote long or longer, hath such great oddes, that I neuer meane to arme my selfe with a short against it; for in my minde and by experience I speake it, there is small skill to be learned with the short sword to encounter as aforesaid, but onely resolution and courage.

He that is valiant and venturous, runneth in, breaking distance, if hee escape both in his going in, and in his comming out vnhurt; from a man skilful, in my minde it is as a man would say chance-medly, for if I haue the Rapier and Dagger, I will hazard both games, and set against any man that holdeth the short sword to be a better weapon, although that *George Giller* hath most highly comended the short sword & dagger, yet one Swallow maketh not a Summer, nor two Woodcocks a Winter, if a thousand more were of his opinion, yet without all doubt there is a great

deale more danger then at Rapier and Dagger, for he that fighteth with a short sword must aduenture in pell mell without feare or wit, but I haue seldome heard or scene any fight with short sword and dagger, although they be each weaponed alike, but one or both commeth home most grievous wounded: my reason is the distance is so narrow that a man can hardly obserue it, except they haue beene both practitioners a long time before hand, for if a man practise continually long sword or long Rapier, yet vpon such a Challenge goeth into the field with a short sword, then the daunger is greatest of all: aske *Augustin Badger*, who speaketh highly in praise and commendation of the short sword, for hee hath tried that weapon in the field so often, and made as many tall fraies as any man that euer I heard of or knew since my time; yet hee will say that he neuer fought in all his life: but was sore and dangerously hurt.

I haue knowen some besides my selfe, that haue fought with Rapier and Dagger twenty times, and haue neuer had one droppe of blood drawne, and yet were accounted men of sufficient vallour and resolution, those which weare short swords depend onely vpon the taking of their enemies point, which is not to bee done if they meete with one that is skilfull: I haue heard many say in talking familiarly concerning this weapon, if I take the point of your long Rapier, then you are gone, but that is not to be done if thou meete with one that is skilfull except thou canst take thy enemies point in thy teeth, otherwise thou canst neuer make seasure vpon his point, if hee bee skilfull as aforesaid, but

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indeed it is an easie matter for a man skilfull to take the point of one that is altogether vnskillfull; but rather not answer thy enemy vntill thou be better weaponed, there are all these excuses to bee framed as in the tenth Chapter of the treatise, there you may find excuses fit for such as weare short Swords, if thou like them not I refer to thy owne wit to frame an excuse; for some shift he must haue that weareth such an idle weapon, for in a word a short sword and dagger to encounter against a skilfull man with rapier and dagger, I hold it a little better then a tobacco-pipe, or a foxe tayle, but yet a short sword is good to encounter against a short sword.

Also a short sword is good to encounter against a naked man, I mean a man vnweaponed, and it is good to serue in the wars on horse-backe or on foote, yet a Rapier will doe as good seruice in the wars as a short sword, if a skilfull man haue him in hand: we haue diuers examples of those which come out of the field fore wounded, and they will say it was because their enemy had a handfull or a foot ods in length of weapon vpon them; wherefore I say one inch is great ods and enough to kill a man, if they both haue skill alike, and doe obserue a true distance: yet now you that are as it were married vnto short swords, because some will not giue their bable for the Tower of *London*, although another doe not esteeme it worth two-pence, yet a man shall as well driue a dog from a peece of bread, as wrest many from that foolish kind of weapon; againe a sword whether he be long or short, is more wearisome and more troublesome then a rapier, for a sword will weare out your hose and three paire of hangers, before a Rapier doe weare out one paire;

but some doe weare their short swords about their neckes in a string, so that if they should haue occasion to vse him, he cannot so ready draw out his sword vpon a suddaine, as he which weareth him vpon his thigh, but of this fashon of wearing their swords, I will not speake much, because I see it is almost left off, for a man may buy a girdle and hangers for ten groats, which will serue for thy Rapier two or three yeere, and a scarfe will cost ten shillings, and yet be worne out in a fortnight; but I will say no more because many giue it ouer for their owne ease, I holde a short sword for to encounter against a rapier very little better then a tobacco pipe as aforesaid, and so as I began I conelude, yet behold a little helpe for him that weareth it.

*A guard for the short sword and dagger to encounter against the long Rapier and Dagger, or else the long sword and Dagger.*



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**K**eepe your sword hilt so high as your head or higher at the point, hanging slope-ways downwards a little wide of your left side, looking vnder your sword arme with both your eyes, and withall put out your sword hand as far from your body as you can, I meane towards your enemy, and your dagger downe by your side, as if you meant not to vse him at all, according to this picture. Lying in this guard your body will seeme to your enemy to be very open, inso-much that he will make no reckoning but to hit you sure with a thrust; the which you must defend by breaking it towards your right side, and with the same motion step in with your left leg, which I will call your hindmost leg, for so he should be vntill you haue made seisure of your enemies weapon: but so soone as seisure is made consume no time in giuing of him leisure to fall backe againe, whereby to recouer his point againe, but forthwith answer him as aforesaid, for hauing brought his long Rapier or sword point to passe cleere on the right side of your body, I meane vnder your right arme, then step in close with your left foot as aforesaid, and make a crosse with your dagger vpon his weapon by clapping in with your dagger vpon the middest of thy enemies long rapier or Sword, keepe your Dagger point vpriight when you goe in, and so soone as you haue discharged the assize of your sword, you may presently turne vp the point of your short sword and thrust, or else you may giue a stroke with him whether you will, and to what part of his body you list, and then fall away hastily againe into your guard and distance; know this, that by stepping in with your hindmost foote, doth gaine more aduantage

rage in ground then you want in length of weapon.

But at any hand suffer your enemy to make the first assault, because hee hath the aduantage in length of weapon, and if thy enemy do charge thee with a blow you may defend it vpon this hanging guard, but to turne vp the point of your sword according to backe-sword rule, & if your enemy charge you with a thrust, you may after seisure made vpon his weapon with your sword as before directed; you may presently so soone as you are in with the hindmost foot turne vp your sword point and thrust, this offence you may performe without the helpe of your dagger, but yet haue a care to prepare your dagger in a readinesse, lest in your going in, your enemy doe also come in with you, and although you haue his long weapon at your command without any danger, yet may he stab you with his dagger, except your dagger be in a readinesse to defend; for a thrust of a dagger is as easie to be defended with a dagger, as any thrust is of any other weapon, but if the defender bee ouercome with fury, and so thrust both together, then they both are endangered, but to descend is better then to offend, and to be offended againe vpright according to the rule of the backe-sword, if your defence be vpon the hanging guard, then clapping vp your dagger and ioyned with him as it were in commission with your sword, and so defend the blow vpon both together, now if your enemy will not charge nor make any assault vpon you, then I aduise you not to gather nor encroach vpon him, except you were equally matched in weapon, for you must obserue the distance which belongeth to your enemies long weapon for this guard or any other. For this guard is but for a suddaine

suddaine shift for those that weare short swords, for keeping a large distance a man with small skill may defend himselfe from a longer weapon, so he seek not hastily by gathering in to offend the other; for the best defence of a shot is to stand out of his watch; so the best defence for a short sword man is to obserue distance as before said, for he shall find himselfe work enough to defend himselfe, for not one in twenty which fighteth with the short sword once will desire to go into the field with such a weapon againe.

Now those that do encounter together with short sword, to short sword, I wish them to frame their guard according to my former direction at the long sword and dagger.

If thou frame thy guard according to my former direction as it is here pictured, then if your enemy doth falsifie a thrust, and you making account to defend it with your Sword, as before, and in turning in your left side hee double a thrust, he may endanger you greatly; wherefore it behooueth thee not to ouercarrie thy Sword vpon the first offer, but that you may recouer him backe into the place againe, so that if you haue a care if you misse the striking by of his Sword on the one side because of his falsifie, you shal meete with him on the other, and so defend your self although you cannot answer whereby to offend him by reason of his falsifie, for vpon a false if you make answer, it will be very dangerous to both.

*Master.* Now my louing scholler I haue alreadie described the rules of fixe weapons, which I promise to instruct thee in, but yet I haue stumbled by chance vpon another weapon, which is as necessarie as anie of the rest; nay more, for without thou be perfect in



the skill of this weapon, all the rest will rather bee hurtfull vnto thee then doe thee good.

*Scholler.* I praie you, what weapon is that?

*Master.* Marrie it is a faire tongue.

*Scholler.* Why doe you call the tongue a weapon?

*Master.* Because at manie times, and for manie purposes, it is the fittest weapon, and the most surest for a mans owne defence, for the tongue at sometimes runneth so at randome, that for want of a bridle like a yong colt ouerthroweth the rider, although it be but a little thing and seldome seene, yet it is often heard to the vtter confusion of manie a man, for the tongue is such a weapon without it bee gouerned, it will cut worse then anie sword; a nettle is a bad weed in a garden, but the tongue will sting worse then a nettle, and pricke deeper then a thorne, likewise manie men are taken by the tongues as birds are taken by the feete, therefore a faire tongue or a tongue gouerned well, will better keep and defend thy bodie from prison, if thou at anie time be committed by the Magistrates when thy Sword will hinder thee if thou trust vnto thy manhood.

*Scholler.* If I fight with no other weapon, but with a faire tongue, the world will condemne mee, and terme me for a coward.

*Master.* A faire tongue is more necessarie for a valorous man, then a good weapon is for a coward, as thou shalt heare: for with a faire tongue thou maiest passe through watch and ward, if thou do chance to trauell in the night by occasion, and thou bee late from thy lodging, at such a time this is a principall weapon, and shall more preuaile then thy Sword, or any other weapon whatsoeuer.

Againe,



Againe, a faire tongue is an excellent weapon, if thou hap in a drunken company, and there fall to quarrelling; in such a case, if thou draw thy weapon, it were as if a man should quench a great fire with a bundle of flaxe, for at such a time, and in such a company, if a man draw his weapon, he may as soone be killed as kill, for drunkards and madde men are all alike during time of the drinke.

Also a faire tongue is a principall weapon to carry with thee, if thou chance to trauell into anie strange countrey: for if an iniurie be offered in a place where thou art not acquainted or vnknowne, thou maiest be oppressed with more then one, for birds of a feather will holde together; and many will hold on the bigger side, for where the hedge is lowest, the beasts will soonest get ouer, but in such a case be well armed with patience for thy Buckler, and a faire tongue for thy Sword, and thy hand readie on thy batte to doe reuerence to euerie vassall, although thou be a Gentleman, for the richest man that is, and the strongest man that euer was, did, and must pocket vp an iniurie in his owne Countrey, much more it is lesse disgrace to thee to put vp an iniurie in a strange place, if an occasion be offered, then rather bestirre thy selfe with a faire tongue, then with thy sword; for in such a case thy sword will auaille thee nothing at all.

*Scholer.* All this while with this weapon you haue not taught me how I should defend my point.

*Maister.* Now I will tell thee, with a faire tongue, thou mayest faue thy money many times, by promising much, and performing little, especially where little is deserued, for those which deserue little, a faire promise will passe, in a manner, as currant as thy money:

ney: I haue knowne many Musitions many times paid with faire words: and now that it commeth into my minde I will tell thee a tale (as I haue heard it reported:) How King *Dyonisius* rewarded a crew of Musitions which came to him with excellent Musicke, and after the Musicke was ended, come againe to me to morrow said the King, and I will giue you a thousand talents; the which promise founded to a sweete and pleasant tune in the Musitions eares: But in the morning they came, expecting the Kings reward, according to his promise: But the King looked strangely vpon them, and asked them what they would haue, And it like your Highnesse, said one of the chiefeft of them, we are come for your gracious reward which you promised vs. What was that, said the King? A thousand talents said the Fidler. Why said the King, Is not that out of thy head yet? thy Musicke is quite out of mine, thou pleasedst my eares with thy musick for the present, & I likewise filled thy eares with a pleasant sound of so much mony: to our matter againe.

A faire tongue, and kinde behauior winneth fauor, both with God and men, whereas those which cannot gouerne their tongues are seldome at quiet: but always punished or vexed with the Law, and troubles in the Lawe consume much money, which with discretion might be kept by gouernement of the tongue.

Now by the hieway, if a carelesse roister in his own name require thee to stand, and by vertue of his owne warrant doth require thy purse; in such a danger, and in such a case betake thy selfe to thy weapon, rather then trust to thy tongue: for to speake faire vnto some in such a case will auaille thee nothing at all, but yet for all that, a faire tongue is as a precious balme to beare  
about

about thee although it bee not sufficient to heale wounds, yet it may be a preservative to keepe thee without hurts: all the comfort thou canst have of thy dearest friends is but little else the bodily sustenance, nay if thy kind and loving wife which is or should be thy greatest comfort in this life vnder God, if she I say do all that euer shee can to pleasure thee, yet thou maist hap to find in this booke, if thou reade it ouer, one lesson or other which may stead thee, or do thee more pleasure then all thy other friends: for here are many things written by me, that peradventure thou maist seeke after a great while, and yet not finde them else-where, and so farewell.

*Scholler.* Yet stay I pray you, resolue me in two questions more afore you goe.

*Master.* What are they?

*Scholler.* First I would know what oddes a tall man of stature hath against a little mans stature, and the oddes that a strong man hath against a weake man.

*Master.* Indeed these are questions which I did meane to write of in my next booke, and therefore will but a little touch them at this time, but for my beginning or prooffe of this matter the better to encourage little men to take heart of grace, and not to dismaied by the high lookes of a tall man, nor feared by their great bragges, there is an old saying, *goeth I neuer saw*, saith the proverbe, *a little man borrow a stoole to breake a tall mans head*, and this proverbe runneth throughout the world, as the corrant through the Gulfe which our Marrinors doe speake of in the way to wards the Indies.

Againe, it is not common to see a tall man val-

rous and skilfull withall, but generally, little men are valorous although not skilfull, now if the tall man be skilfull, the little man must for his aduantage, suffer the tall man to proffer him play first, but then vpon the little mans defence presently, with the same motion steppe forth with foote and hand, and so by a quicke answere endanger the tall man: now if the tall man be not skilfull, whereby to steppe forth with his hand and foote together, when hee maketh play to the little man, then the little man skilfull herein, getteth three foote at the least by answering euery assault that the tall man maketh by stepping forth with the foote and hand as before said: but this must be thy helpe and this must be thy care, though a little man alwaies suffer the tall man to make play first, especially if he be skilfull, and then be nimble with the answere, stepping it home with thy foote and hand together, according to my directions, following the first picture, for what thou wantest in reach, is gotten by thy comming.

There is another old saying going thus, a tall man is so faire a marke, that a little man skilfull cannot misse him, and a short man is so little and so nimble, that if he haue but a little skill, a tall man cannot hit him for with his weapons, and a good guard in a manner hee will couer all his whole body with his weapons. Lo this is my opinion, I doe not say all other are of my minde, for there is an old saying goeth thus, so many men, so many mindes, what other mens opinions is, I haue not to doe withall, but this I can say of my owne knowledge, that I haue not knowen one tall man amongst twenty, that hath good skill, nor sufficient valour answerable vnto their

their statures, for tall men are more fearefull then men of a meane stature, for I haue seene the triall both in the warres and in single combat; yet take me not vp before I bee downe, for I doe not here condemne all tall men of personage, for so I should greatly ouer-shoote my selfe, and greatly wrong many tall men of stature and vallour, and also of good resolution, but yet ali of them are not so, wherefore what I haue said, it is to encourage little men of meane stature, hauing skill not to feare any man vpon good occasion, those that spend their daies without practising skil in weapons, so that when they are wronged they fall to wishing: oh I would to God I had skill in my weapon, for then would I answer the wrong that such a man, and such a man hath done mee, but I could wish such vnskillfull to liue quiet, and not to maintaine any quarrell, lest they loose their liues for want of experience, as many of them haue done.

*Scholler.* Now 'as you haue promised me, I pray you let me heare your opinion concerning the oddes betweene a strong man of strength, and a little or a weake man of stature and strength.

*Master.* Then this briefly is my opinion, a strong man hath great oddes at the gripe, or in a close at any blunt weapon, but vpon the point of a sharpe weapon, in fight a strong man hath small or no oddes at all of the little or weake man, wherefore I would not haue a little man bee afraide of a tall or ouer-growne man, no although he were farre bigger then a man, for in performance of any things to be done with weapons, there is no more to bee found in the best of them of great stature vpon triall, then is in the

the ordinary men, or then is in a little or weake man, may many times the little or weake man doth as good or better seruice in the face of the enemy vpon the point of the weapon then the taller man doth, for although his stature be small, yet commonly a little mans heart is bigge.

*Observations for a Scholler or any other.*

What length thy weapons should be.

How you should button your foiles for your practise.

An easie way to weapon thy selfe at time of need.

Let thy Rapier or Sword be foure foote at the least, and thy Dagger two foote, for it is better haue the Dagger too long then too short, and rather hard then soft, for a short dagger may deceiue a skilfull man his defence, either of blow or thrust: I haue often knowen a soft dagger cut in twaine with a Rapier.

Let thy Staffe of practise be seauen or eight foote, and better, button both thy foiles and thy stauies before the practise with them, for otherwise the vn-skilfull may thrust out one anothers eyes, yea although there was no harme meant, yet an eye may be lost except the occasion be preuented.

To make your buttons take wooll or flocks, and wrappe it round in leather so bigge as a Tennis-ball, then make a notch within halfe an inch of your wooden foile or staffe, but if it be an Iron foile, then let there be an Iron button riuetted on the point, so broad as two pence, and then take your button being made as before said, and set it on the end of  
your



your Staffe or Foile likewise, and then take leather and draw hard vpon it, and binde it with Shooma-  
kers-ends or parck-thread in the notch, and another  
leather vpon that againe, for one leather may bee  
worne out with a little practise.

Now if thou haue a quarrell and willing to an-  
swere, and being not furnished with a Rapier, then  
take a cudgell of what length thou wilt thy selfe,  
and make a shoulder within a handfull of the ende  
of it by cutting him halfe way through, and there  
binde the haft of thy knife, and so the shoulder will  
keepe him from slipping backe, and this is as sure  
and as fearefull, and as good as a Rapier to encoun-  
ter against a Rapier and Dagger, or a Sword and  
Dagger, so that you haue a close hilted Dagger:  
likewise you may tie a point at the But-end of the  
Cudgell, to put in thy finger that thy Cudgell  
slippe not out of thy hand: this weapon I haue  
made good prooffe of, but it was in another  
Country, where I could get no other weapon to my  
minde.

## CHAP. XII.

*This Chapter sheweth the seuerall kinde  
of weapons which are to be  
plaied at.*



Now one thing more vnto the vulgar sort concerning the seuerall sorts of weapons, because vnto many it seemeth so strange, that if a Master of Defence should tell them that he can teach thee skill at Fence at twelue seuerall sorts of weapons, they will straight-way say, that there are not so many: now for their further satisfaction, they shall heare the diuision of more then twenty sorts of weapons, which Masters of this Noble art of Defence, are, or, else ought to be expert therein, like vnto a skilfull Cooke which can of one sort of meate make diuerse dishes, or like the cunning Physition, who can with a hearbe being diuersely compounded, make it serue to diuers purposes and vses: to which effect my meaning is, that an expert Master of Defence can of one kinde of weapon make many, as by this sequell following shall appeare, and all these weapons haue beene plaied at in Challenges, here in *England* at seuerall times.

of

*Of the Sword are deriued these  
seauen.*

The two hand Sword.	Gantlet.
The Back-sword.	The Bastard Sword, the
Sword and Dagger.	which Sword is some-
Sword and Buckler.	thing shorter then a
Short Sword and Dag-	long Sword, and yet
ger.	longer then a Short-
The short Sword and	sword.

*Now with the Rapier seauen  
more.*

The first Rapier and	The Halfe-pike.
Dagger.	The Long-pike.
The single Rapier.	The Long-staffe.
The case of Rapiers.	The Quarter-staffe.
The Rapier and Cloake.	The Welch-hooke or
The Rapier and Target.	Bill.
The Rapier and Gantlet.	The Haulbert.
The Rapier and Pike.	The Rapier and Dagger
	against Short-sword
	and Dagger.
The Dutch Fauchin.	Likewise Rapier and
The Poll-axe.	Dagger, or Sword
The Battel-axe.	and Dagger against
The two Daggers.	a Staffe or Haul-
	bert.
	Also the Staffe against a
	Flaile.

The single Dagger.

Ec 2

Back

Back-sword against sword | Single Rapier against  
and dagger. | Rapier and Dagger.

Now my second booke which is already in hand shall shew my iudgement, and the chiefest rules according vnto my practise at all these seuerall weapons, if death doe not preuent me before I haue accomplished my pretence, yet for doubt thereof, the defence of the Staffe with a Rapier and Dagger, or with Sword and Dagger I will giue thee a little direction, which being practised it may stead thee as much as thy life is worth. I doe this the rather, and for because that the Staffe is a weapon which many men doe carry, and with skill it hath great oddes against either of the two aforesaid weapons, but yet because euerie man which carrieth a weapon, hath the perfect skill in that weapon which hee carrieth, but admit that he hath good skill, yet in knowing the best Defence, it may preuent thee from a danger.

Now thou must remember if thou bee charged vpon with a Staffe, suddenly summon vp thy wits in that which before hand thou hast learned for thy Defence, and thinke this with thy selfe; I am now to encounter against a Staffe: why then thus frame thy garde, put thy Dagger acrosse on the in-side of thy Rapier or Sword, and let the crosse bee made within halfe a foote of thy Rapier or Sword-hilt, bearing vp both thy hilts euen so high as thy cheeke, looking with both thy eyes betwixt both thy weapons.

Thus

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Thus being guarded, it may bee, that thine enemy will charge thee with a thrust, for because thy breast will seeme most open to him, the which and if hee doe, then turne downe the point of thy Rapier and Sword, and with thy Dagger force him downe which will bee a stronger Defence then with one alone: and thus by turning downe both thy points together, strike thine enemies thrust of the Staffe towards thy right side: Loe, thus doe me with both thy weapons; then will thine enemies thrust passe cleare vnder thy right arme, but neyther with the Sword nor yet with the Dagger alone; the thrust of a staffe is not to be defended without greater danger then with both of them, as before hath beene rehearsed.

Now and if thine enemy doe chaunce to charge thee with a blow, thereby thinking to driue both thy Rapier and Dagger, or Sword and Dagger vnto thy head: For I haue knowne many to be of that opinion with me. But the blowe of a Staffe, stricke at the head, may be defended with the single Sword or Rapier according vnto the Backe-sword rule: but to beare thy Dagger with thy Rapier or Sword, that is the most sure way, keeping both thy points vpright, and so to beare them towards the right side, or to thy left side, according as thou shalt perceiue thine enemy charge thee.

Thus will I heere conclude and make an end with this short direction concerning this one weapon, because I haue spoken something already touching and concerning this purpose, although it be not so ample as now it is, and yet heereafter (by Almighty Gods good helpe) I will speake more at large here-

of, this onely serueth but to rowze vp your spirites,  
 that you may the better prepare your selfe for the  
 next. The horse starteth at the Spurre, so (in loue)  
 I pricke you forward in this commendable Art: and  
 so, I hope, that this Whetstone will make your blunt  
 Wittes somewhat sharper: Golde is not put in the  
 fire to be consumed, but to bee purified; euen so I  
 hope, the trauell which I haue taken heerein  
 will not make you to proue worse, but  
 rather somewhat the better  
 in all goodnes.

[\* \* \*]

F I N I S.

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*My farewell to Plimouth.*

**M**OST noble *Plimouth*, the great loue which I found in thee amongst both rich and poore, now drawes me backe againe to giue thee a kind and heartie farewell, and yet at this time I yeeld but onlie thanks as my pay- Mistresse, but yet I desire not to die indebted, without making some better recompence to some of my chiefeest well-willers and friends, if my abilitie proue answerable to my mind: for a Christmasse banquet may be required at Easter, and so when I am better able I will make amends; but yet me thinks I should not leaue so famous a towne with such a threed-bare fare-well, but here may a question arise of those which know it not, why it should be more famous then any other towne? which I will tell thee, set her wealth and riches aside, yet for that onlie not the like towne in this land of her bignesse, I meane so long as the wars continued, she is also famous for her strong fortification, but more famous for her entertainment; for twentie thousand strangers haue had vpon a suddaine good and sufficient lodging, and other necessaries; yea, whether they haue had mony, or not, but most famous of all for her gallant harbours, for a thousand shippes may safely ride, and all within halfe a league of the Towne; it is the chiefe arriuing place for all the South and Weast Countries: and in a word, the onely Key of *England*. In the time of warres *Plimmouth* flowed, as it were, with milke and hony, and then it flourished with Gallants

Gallants great store, tracing the streetes so thicke in swarmes like as at *westminster* in a Terme time, and although many of them went away without bidding thee farewell; yet I will, as it were, bite thee by the finger, because thou shalt remember me, for if it bee not possible for the mother to forget her childe, then (without all peradventure) I shall neuer forget thee: Once thou wert a golden place, but now an yron or a leaden towne, I meane, in a manner turned vpside downe, which makes me sory, and many more; but yet be of good cheare, for after a storme cometh a calme: plucke vp thy heart, and let it not grieue thee to see a King content with his kingdome; for if it were not so, it should be so.

Although of late thy purse hath had a strong purgation, which maketh some of you to shrinke vp the shoulders like a Spaniard, and hang downe the head like a bull-rush, and repenting your selues, that you had not kept the goods better which you got in time of warres; and this mee thinketh I heare some of you say your selues: Oh what a foole was I that tooke not Time by the fore-locke before he did passe away, but must now catch at her balde pate, where is nothing to holde by: let it not grieue thee, for if thou hadst those goods againe, they would consume like butter against the Sunne: for as it is not possible to keepe the Indian beefe sweete two dayes, with all the salt in the world, no more is the goods got by the warres to be of any continuance, no although a man had them that were as wise as wit could make them, but it seldome commeth into such mens hands, but rather vnto such as resemble *Rufus* the Ruffian which had God pictured on the inside of his Target, and the diuel on the

the out-side, with this poesie on the in-side, *If thou wilt not haue mee, the other shall*: as not caring whether he went to God or the diuell: many such fellows attend vpon the fortune of the wars, making hauocke and spoile, and many times murthering those that neuer meant hurt vnto them nor their king for whom they fight: for yet such, as I say, make no conscience, but as the Prouerb goeth, Robbe *Peter* and pay *Paul*, accounting all fish which commeth to the net, getting it by hooke or by crooke, some out of *Iudas* bag, and some out of the diuels budget: for I haue seene a man of warre, as hungry vpon a poore Fisherman, as they would be on a *Carioke*, as those that haue seene men of warre, haue seene how vnconscionably *Rufus* the ruffian and his fellows haue dealt with those poor Fishermen whose whole estate, for maintenance both for their wives, and children, did relie vpon the gains, which the poore men by great paines did get with their bore, yet so hard-hearted haue these men of warre beene vnto those poore Fishers, that neither for the teares of the olde men, which for griefe would beate their heads against the shippe side, yet neither this nor the pittifull complaint of the yong men, for all their yeelding and kneeling, yet would they take away their fish, their meat and drinke, and their cloths from their backs, their sailes from their yards, yet not so contented, but in the end set them ashore, and either sinke their boate or burne him aboard the man of warre, to the vtter vndoing of many a poore man; now iudge whether it be possible, that these goods so gotten can prosper, for they are gotten with no better a conscience then a strumpet getteth her money; and therefore it will prosper no better: for looke

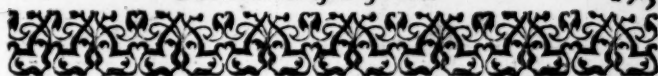
what a strumpet getteth of twenty, shee spendeth it vpon one which shee doth loue and affect aboue all the rest: euen so, many souldiers and men of warre, what spoyles they get, they are not long in spending of it: but as the Prouerbe goeth, Light come, and light goe: ill got, and wickedly spent: for they put it into a bottomlesse bagge, which neuer holdes thrift long.

Loe, thus my opinion you haue heard, and I yeeld vp my verdi& thus, That the goods which is gotten by the warres, is ill gotten: and hee which hath but one peny worth of ill gotten goods in his house, God will send a curse vpon all the rest: then let vs pray for peace, rather then warres, and euery man learne to labor with his hands, to maintaine spending: wherefore, set thy wittes and thy hands to labour, and turne ouer the leafe; I meane, learne a new lesson, for looke what is gotten with labour, will bee spent with discretion, or else kept with warinesse; and so I greeete not onely *Plimmouth* alone, but all *Denonshire* and *Cornewall*, with as many kinde commendations, as it is possible for my Penne to expresse, and all

I protest with true loue from my heart,  
and so I leaue you, with a thousand Farewells to  
you all.

*Your euer-louing friend,*

IOSEPH SVETNAM.

*The Authors Conclusion.*

**N**OW (gentle Reader) I doe intreate thee so beare with my rudenesse, I am no Scholler, for I do protest I neuer went to Schoole six moneths in all my life, nor I neuer did write one line of this Booke by the direction of any other teacher; nor did I euer aske the opinion of any other Professor, since the time that I was first taught, and that was when I was yong; and then I had some of my skil in *London*, and some in other places, where it was my chance to trauell. Againe, I did write this Booke by peece-meale; for after I first beganne, I left off writing a weeke, and sometimes a moneth together, before I writ againe; and so forgetting oftentimes what I had written before. Againe, some chiefe notes I haue left out, which I thought I had written of before: wherefore they shall follow in my second Booke. Now (Gentle Reader) for thy benefit I haue begunne, if there be any other that find fault, and cannot amend it, let them iudge of their wit that heare them talke: but if I shall heare those my selfe speake against this Booke which doe not goe about to amend it, then if they were as good as *George a Greene*, yet would I not be feared with deedes, much lesse with words, but will answer them, not onely with words, but with weapons, for this Booke was printed in haste, at the earnest request of some friends of mine. Also I wrote it to profite those that can not come where Teachers are: and againe, there are few which teach this Arte



that doe trauell, the reason is, as I thinke, they are little set by when they come into the country amongst you: Now it is not enough to haue this booke in thy pocket, but to exercise thy body with all, that thereby thou maist haue the perfect skill thereof in thy head, and so praying thee to excuse me in the grosse penning of it, and beare with me a little the rather in that I was neuer Scholler, as I said before, and as it plainly appeareth by the grosse penning of it, but my folly herein shalbe vpon my head, yet I pray thee let it passe a little the rather, and giue it your good word, for because I haue taken paines in hope to doe thee good, but not for any gaine (I protest before God) but onely because I know it so laudable an exercise, and more commendable then any other, wee see daily these bookes scoffed at, which were made by learned and good Schollers, for if there were one which excell ten thousand, yet euery one will not speake well of him, but he shall haue in spight of his reeth back-biters and fault-finders, much more my selfe being the lest of ten thousand must not stabbe euery one which will speake in discommendations, both of me and my Booke, but if I may escape handsomely from scoffes and mockes of such Idiates which are vsually contemptors of such laudable exercises: then I accompt that I haue made a good hand.

For herein I haue shoven but my owne opinion and iudgement in setting out this booke, now I doe not say it is other mens opinions: for none but my selfe was counsell, nor had any hand in this matter; therefore I make no question that other men are of other mindes, yet obseruing these rules, and bearing these



these lessons in memory, they may serue thy turne aswell as they haue serued mine all the daies of my life hetherto: but yet beleue what you list of it, and leaue what you like not, now if in my good intention and true meaning I bee vnderferuedly wronged, I thinke it wilbe by none but such pot-companions which cudgell there wits and beate their braines to shift for mony to that vse which often-times makes the sonne so hardy as to call his father knaue, or worse.

Now if my booke doe come vnto the view of any such, I will impute it vnto the Idlenesse of their braine, or vnto the spitefulnesse of an enuious minde, which will neuer commend nor allow any other mans man-hood, opinion or iudgement to bee so good as their owne, not much like vnto the proude Pharizee, who said that his life in all respect was better then any other, now mistake mee not, for I doe not say so, because you should thinke that this worke cannot bee mended, for it is farre from my thought to thinke that this booke is so wel penned as to be without fault, or to please all, neither is it so wel as it might haue beene, if my leisure would haue serued me to amend some faults which I know in it my selfe, indeed, I must confesse that there are many in this land of this noble and worthy art besides my selfe, which might haue taken this matter in hand, because many of them are more fit both for wisdom and learning, but I see they haue not gone about it, wherefore if any blame me for shewing my good will, I hope those which haue knowen mee and seene my behauiour wil answere for me with reasonable speech

against those which obiect against me: no, if reason will not rule them, but like *Balaams Ass*, will striue against weapons, then I pray you referre the quarrell vnto my selfe, and let me answer my owne wrong which I haue done them heerein, for I had rather loose my life in defence of my reputation and credit, if there were such a danger in fighting, then my friend should loose one drop of bloud in my quarrell: therefore while I am liuing, wrong me not, for hee which fighteth for another, seeketh his owne destruction, so praying you if I haue offended any, let me answer it my selfe while I am liuing, for when I am dead hee deales vnchristianlike, that will abuse me: and so

I rest,

*Thine euer to helpe thee hereafter in  
what I may,*

Thy friend,

JOSEPH SVETNAM.

